

# NXIVM

**NXIVM** (/ˈnɛksiəm/ *NEKS-ee-əm*) is a self-proclaimed American multi-level marketing company<sup>[2]</sup> based in Clifton Park, New York, a suburb of Albany, which offers personal and professional development seminars through its "Executive Success Programs" of large-group awareness training.<sup>[3]</sup> The company has been widely described as a cult,<sup>[4]</sup> and is alleged to have been a recruiting platform for a secret society (variously called "DOS" or "The Vow") in which women were branded and forced into sexual slavery.

In early 2018, NXIVM's founder, Keith Raniere, and his associate, actress Allison Mack, were arrested and indicted on federal charges related to DOS, including sex trafficking.<sup>[5]</sup> Others associated with NXIVM were also charged with federal crimes. As of April 2019, five people associated with NXIVM—Mack, NXIVM co-founder Nancy Salzman, Lauren Salzman, Seagram heiress Clare Bronfman, and bookkeeper Kathy Russell—had pleaded guilty to various charges.<sup>[6][7]</sup> Raniere was convicted in federal court of sex trafficking and racketeering on June 19, 2019.<sup>[8][9]</sup> On September 30, 2020, Clare Bronfman became the first defendant sentenced in the case, when she was ordered to serve six years and nine months in federal prison.<sup>[10]</sup>

After Raniere's conviction, he continued to direct loyalists from behind bars, encouraging continued recruitment.<sup>[11][12]</sup> At his direction, members of the group have regularly danced outside Raniere's jail and staged coordinated protests of individual prosecutors. In September 2020, it was estimated about 50 to 60 people remained "very loyal" to Raniere, who was sentenced to 120 years in prison in October 2020.<sup>[13][14]</sup>

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### NXIVM Corporation



<b>Type</b>	Privately held company
<b>Industry</b>	Multi-level marketing; personal development
<b>Founded</b>	1998
<b>Founder</b>	<a href="#">Keith Raniere</a> <span><span></span></span>
<b>Headquarters</b>	<a href="#">Clifton Park, New York, U.S.</a>
<b>Key people</b>	<a href="#">Keith Raniere</a> (co-founder, leader) <a href="#">Nancy Salzman</a> (co-founder, president) <a href="#">Allison Mack</a> (recruiter, leader) <a href="#">Clare Bronfman</a> (funder, leader) <sup>[1]</sup>
<b>Products</b>	Personal-growth seminars
<b>Website</b>	<a href="#">nxivm.com</a> <span>(Archived (<a href="https://web.archive.org/web/20190412162926/http://www.nxivm.com/">https://web.archive.org/web/20190412162926/http://www.nxivm.com/</a>))</span>

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## History

Before founding NXIVM, Ranieri created Consumers Buyline, a business venture that the New York Attorney General accused of having been a pyramid scheme; Ranieri signed a consent order in 1996 in which he denied any wrongdoing, but agreed to pay a \$40,000 fine and to be permanently banned from "promoting, offering or granting participation in a chain distribution scheme".<sup>[15]</sup>

### Founding and initial success

In 1998, Ranieri and Nancy Salzman founded NXIVM, a personal development company<sup>[16]</sup> offering "Executive Success Programs" and a range of techniques for self-improvement.<sup>[17][18][19]</sup> Ranieri claimed that the programs' "main emphasis is to have people experience more joy in their lives."<sup>[18]</sup>

During NXIVM seminars, students were expected to call Ranieri and Salzman "Vanguard" and "Prefect", respectively.<sup>[20][21][22]</sup> *The Hollywood Reporter* wrote that Ranieri "adopted the title 'Vanguard' from a favorite arcade game... in which the destruction of one's enemies increased one's own power."<sup>[23]</sup> Within the organization, the reasoning for the titles was that Ranieri was the leader of a philosophical movement and Salzman was his first student.<sup>[19]</sup>

By 2003, 3,700 people had taken part in ESP classes, reportedly including businesswoman Sheila Johnson, former Surgeon General Antonia Novello, Enron executive Stephen Cooper, and Ana Cristina Fox, daughter of former Mexican president Vicente Fox.<sup>[24]</sup> Other participants were reported to include entrepreneur Richard Branson (who denied having taken the classes<sup>[25][26]</sup>), Edgar Bronfman Sr.,<sup>[24]</sup> and actresses Linda Evans, Grace Park, and Nicki Clyne.<sup>[27][28]</sup> In the early 2000s, Seagram heiresses Clare and Sara Bronfman, daughters of Edgar Bronfman Sr., became attached to the organization.<sup>[28][19]</sup>

### Cult allegations in early 2000s

NXIVM's training is a trade secret, subject to non-disclosure agreements, but reportedly uses a technique the organization calls "rational inquiry" to facilitate personal and professional development. In 2003, NXIVM sued the Ross Institute in the case known as *NXIVM Corp. v. Ross Institute*, alleging copyright infringement for publishing excerpts of content from its manual in three critical articles commissioned by cult investigator Rick Alan Ross and posted on his website.<sup>[29][30][31]</sup> Ross posted a psychiatrist's assessment of NXIVM's "secret" manual on his website that called the regimen "expensive brainwashing". Ross obtained the manual from former member Stephanie Franco, a co-defendant in the trial, who had signed a non-disclosure agreement not to divulge information from the manual to others. NXIVM filed suits in both New York and New Jersey, but both were dismissed.<sup>[27][32]</sup> On appeal, the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit affirmed the lower court's dismissal, ruling that the defendant's critical analysis of material obtained in bad faith (i.e. in violation of a non-disclosure agreement) was fair use since the secondary use was transformative as criticism and was not a potential replacement for the original on the market.<sup>[33][34][35]</sup>

In October 2003, *Forbes* published an article on NXIVM and Raniere.<sup>[24]</sup> *Vanity Fair* subsequently reported of the article: "People at NXIVM were stunned. Expecting a positive story, the top ranks had spoken to *Forbes*, including Raniere, Salzman, and Sara Bronfman. What upset them above all were Edgar Bronfman's remarks. "I think it's a cult," He told the magazine, going on to say that he was troubled about the "emotional and financial" investment in NXIVM by his daughters, to whom he had not spoken in months.<sup>[24]</sup> In 2006, *Forbes* published an article about the Bronfman sisters, stating that they had taken out a line of credit to loan NXIVM \$2 million, repayable through personal training sessions and phone consultations with Salzman.<sup>[36]</sup> Another *Forbes* article in 2010 discussed the failures of commodities and real estate deals by the Bronfmans made on Raniere's advice.<sup>[37]</sup>

## 2006–2015

After actress Kristin Kreuk became involved with NXIVM in 2006, Salzman and her daughter Lauren went to Vancouver, British Columbia, to recruit Kreuk's *Smallville* co-star Allison Mack.<sup>[23]</sup> The younger Salzman (Lauren, herself a junior NXIVM leader)<sup>[19]</sup> bonded with Mack, and the latter became involved,<sup>[23]</sup> though Kreuk subsequently left NXIVM.<sup>[38]</sup> Mack became "an enthusiastic proselytizer" for NXIVM, persuading her parents to take courses, and, after wrapping production of *Smallville* in 2011, moved to Clifton Park, New York, near NXIVM's home base in Albany.<sup>[23]</sup>

In 2008, the Bronfman sisters allegedly pressured Stephen Herbits, a confidant of their father, to ask Albany County District Attorney David Soares, New York Governor Eliot Spitzer, and New Jersey Attorney General Anne Milgram to open criminal investigations into NXIVM's critics. NXIVM reportedly kept dossiers on Soares, Spitzer, political consultant Roger Stone, U.S. Senator Chuck Schumer, and Albany *Times Union* publisher George Randolph Hearst III in a box in the basement of Nancy Salzman's home.<sup>[39]</sup> According to the *Times Union*, NXIVM "developed a reputation for aggressively pursuing critics and defectors who broke from its ranks, including using litigation to punish critics of Raniere, the organization, or its training methods."<sup>[40]</sup>

The World Ethical Foundations Consortium, an organization co-founded by Raniere and the Bronfman sisters, sponsored a visit to Albany by the 14th Dalai Lama in 2009. The visit was initially canceled due to negative press about NXIVM,<sup>[41]</sup> but was rescheduled; the Dalai Lama spoke at Albany's Palace Theatre in May 2009.<sup>[42]</sup> In 2017, Lama Tenzin Dhonden, the self-styled "Personal Emissary for Peace for the Dalai Lama" who had arranged the appearance, was suspended from his position amid corruption charges; the investigation also revealed a personal relationship between Dhonden and Sara Bronfman, which began in 2009.<sup>[43]</sup>

NXIVM has been described as a pyramid scheme,<sup>[44][45][46][17]</sup> a sex-trafficking operation,<sup>[47]</sup> a cult,<sup>[48][49][50]</sup> and a sex cult.<sup>[51]</sup> In a 2010 *Times Union* article, former NXIVM coaches characterized students as "prey" for Raniere's sexual or gambling-related proclivities.<sup>[52]</sup> Kristin Keeffe, a longtime partner of Raniere and mother of his child, left the group in 2014 and called Raniere "dangerous", saying, "[a]ll the worst things you know about NXIVM are true."<sup>[53]</sup>

In 2014, Raniere founded the NXIVM-affiliated news organization The Knife of Aristotle,<sup>[54]</sup> later known as The Knife and The Knife Media.<sup>[55][56]</sup> The Knife of Aristotle was subsequently described as a fake news website and a cult.<sup>[57]</sup> The organization also reportedly hired journalists in an attempt to gain media support and solicit new members to NXIVM, as well as fabricating staff members.<sup>[57][58][59]</sup>

## Media investigations of DOS

Starting with reports by investigative journalist Frank Parlato in June 2017<sup>[60]</sup> and bolstered by an October 2017 *New York Times* article, details began to emerge about Dominus Obsequious Sororium, a "secret sisterhood" within NXIVM, in which female members were allegedly called slaves, branded with the initials of Raniere and Mack, subjected to corporal punishment from their "masters", and required to provide nude photos or other potentially damaging information about themselves as "collateral".<sup>[46][18][61][62][17]</sup> Law enforcement representatives have alleged that DOS members were forced into sexual slavery.<sup>[63]</sup>

Sarah Edmondson, a Canadian actress who had been an ESP participant since 2005, said that she left NXIVM after Mack inducted her into DOS the previous March at her Albany home. Edmondson alleged that participants were blindfolded naked, held down by Mack and three other women, and branded by NXIVM-affiliated doctor Danielle Roberts, using a cauterizing pen.<sup>[46][18][64][65][23]</sup> Appearing on an A&E television program about cults, Edmondson provided additional context for the use of the "collateral" concept, saying that it was used in innocuous forms from the earliest, outermost stages of NXIVM in order to acclimate victims—for example, collateralizing small amounts of money that one might forfeit if one did not go to the gym one day.<sup>[18][19]</sup> The *Times* later reported that hundreds of members left NXIVM after Edmondson went public about her experience.<sup>[19]</sup>

On December 15, 2017, the ABC newsmagazine *20/20* aired an exposé featuring interviews with many former NXIVM adherents, including Edmondson and Catherine Oxenberg, who alleged that her daughter, India Oxenberg, was in danger due to the group. Several former members reported financial and sexual predation by NXIVM leaders.<sup>[46][61][66]</sup> Edmondson was further featured in "Escaping NXIVM", during the first season of the CBC podcast *Uncover*.<sup>[67]</sup>

Seven socially prominent Latinos, including Emilio Salinas Occelli (son of former president Carlos Salinas de Gortari) and Ana Cristina Fox (daughter of former president Vicente Fox), Rosa Laura Junco, Loreta Garza Dávila (a business leader from Nuevo Leon), Daniela Padilla, Camila, and Mónica Durán, have been accused of involvement, according to a *New York Times* article published on May 26, 2019.<sup>[68]</sup>

## Criminal prosecutions and convictions

In March 2018, Raniere was arrested and indicted on charges related to DOS, including sex trafficking, sex trafficking conspiracy, and conspiracy to commit forced labor.<sup>[5][69]</sup> He was arrested in Mexico and held in custody in New York after appearing in federal court in Fort Worth, Texas.<sup>[70]</sup> The indictment alleged that at least one woman was coerced into sex with Raniere, who forced DOS members to undergo the branding ritual alleged by Edmondson and others.<sup>[71][72]</sup> United States Attorney Richard Donoghue stated that Raniere "created a secret society of women whom he had sex with and branded with his initials, coercing them with the threat of releasing their highly personal information and taking their assets."<sup>[17]</sup>

On April 20, 2018, Mack was arrested and indicted on similar charges to Raniere's. According to prosecutors, after she recruited women into first NXIVM and then DOS, Mack coerced them into engaging in sexual activity with Raniere and performing menial tasks, for which Raniere allegedly paid her.<sup>[23]</sup> Mack was further alleged to be NXIVM's second-in-command after Raniere.<sup>[23][38][73][74][75]</sup> On April 24, Mack was released on \$5 million bond pending trial and held under house arrest with her parents in California.<sup>[76][77]</sup> On May 4, Raniere pleaded not guilty.<sup>[78]</sup>

Salzman's home was raided shortly after Raniere's arrest,<sup>[17]</sup> and prosecutors stated during his arraignment that further arrests and a superseding indictment for Raniere and Mack should be expected.<sup>[79][80]</sup> In late May, authorities moved to seize two NXIVM-owned properties near Albany.<sup>[81]</sup>

In April 2018, the *New York Post* reported that NXIVM had moved to Brooklyn, New York, and was being led by Clare Bronfman.<sup>[82]</sup> On June 12, 2018, the *Times Union* reported that NXIVM had suspended its operations due to "extraordinary circumstances facing the company".<sup>[83]</sup> Bronfman was arrested on July 24 and charged with racketeering. She was released to house arrest after signing a \$100 million bail bond. Also arrested and charged with the same crime were NXIVM President Nancy Salzman; her daughter, Lauren Salzman; and another NXIVM employee, Kathy Russell.<sup>[84][85]</sup>

On March 13, 2019, Nancy Salzman pleaded guilty to a charge of racketeering criminal conspiracy.<sup>[86][87][88]</sup> Also in March 2019, Lauren Salzman pleaded guilty to racketeering and racketeering conspiracy.<sup>[89]</sup> On April 8, 2019, Mack pleaded guilty to racketeering.<sup>[90]</sup> On April 19, 2019, Bronfman pleaded guilty to charges of harboring an alien and identity fraud; bookkeeper Russell also pleaded guilty to visa fraud.<sup>[91]</sup>

Raniere's federal trial began on May 7, 2019.<sup>[92]</sup> On June 19, 2019, he was convicted of racketeering and sex trafficking.<sup>[8]</sup>

In January 2020, a federal lawsuit was filed in New York accusing Raniere and 14 associates of conducting illegal psychological experiments on members of the company and abusing them physically, emotionally and financially.<sup>[93]</sup>

On September 30, 2020, Judge Nicholas G. Garaufis of the United States District Court for the Eastern District of New York sentenced Bronfman to six years and nine months in federal prison; her attorney promised to appeal, calling the sentence "an abomination."<sup>[10]</sup>

## Beliefs and practices

In NXIVM classes, rank was displayed through colored sashes, similar to colored belts in martial arts.<sup>[94]</sup>

NXIVM featured a 12-point "Mission Statement" which participants recited during classes, pledging to "purge" themselves "of all parasite and envy-based habits", to enroll others, and to "ethically control as much of the money, wealth and resources of the world as possible within my success plan".<sup>[95]</sup> Photographs of Raniere and Nancy Salzman were displayed during classes, which would conclude with participants showing gratitude to the two leaders.<sup>[96]</sup>

NXIVM conducted "Intensives" classes for 12 hours daily for 16 days. One cited price was \$7,500.<sup>[97][98]</sup> Classes were divided into modules. In one module, "Relationship Sourcing", students were instructed to explore the benefits they would receive in the event of a partner's sudden death. Another module, "Dracula and his ghouls", reportedly discussed psychopaths and their followers. Other module titles included "Best People; Perfect World" and "The Heroic Struggle".<sup>[99]</sup>

NXIVM featured a practice called "exploration of meaning" that involved senior members questioning participants as they delved into their childhood memories.<sup>[100]</sup>



NXIVM founder Keith Raniere

NXIVM taught that some people, called "Suppressives", try to impede progress within NXIVM.<sup>[101]</sup> People who irrevocably turned against Raniere were said to have undergone "The Fall" and were labeled, in the words of a former member, as "Luciferians, lost people for whom bad feels good, and good feels bad."<sup>[102]</sup>

NXIVM members organized Vanguard Week, an annual celebration of Raniere's birthday.<sup>[103]</sup>

NXIVM has been associated with several related organizations. **Jness** was a society aimed at women, while the **Society of Protectors** was aimed primarily at men.<sup>[100]</sup> A third group was known by the acronym DOS, short for "**Dominus Obsequious Sororium**"; this Latin phrase was translated by one member to mean "Master over Slave Women".<sup>[104]</sup> In 2006, Raniere founded **Rainbow Cultural Garden**, an international chain of childcare organizations in which children were to be exposed to seven different languages.<sup>[105]</sup>

Some members of NXIVM's inner circle were reportedly taught that, in past lives, they were high-ranking Nazis.<sup>[106]</sup> Barbara Bouchey was reportedly the reincarnation of Holocaust architect Reinhard Heydrich, while Nancy Salzman was supposed to be the reincarnation of Hitler. Raniere claimed to have been a leader of anti-Nazi partisans.<sup>[107]</sup>

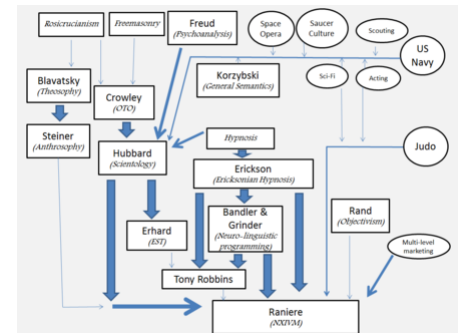
According to a complaint filed by a former NXIVM member, a medical doctor performed an experiment on her that involved recording her EEG responses while viewing footage of people being murdered.<sup>[102][108]</sup> Brandon P. Porter, the doctor, faced 24 professional conduct charges from the New York State Board of the Office of Professional Medical Conduct, including "moral unfitness to practice medicine".<sup>[109][110]</sup> In August 2019, Porter's license was revoked for his role in the experiments and for his failure to report the possible outbreak of a norovirus at NXIVM's 2016 "V-Week" retreat.<sup>[111][112]</sup>

NXIVM teachings drew upon diverse influences, including Ayn Rand ("parasites"), L. Ron Hubbard ("suppressives"), Milton Erickson's hypnosis, Isaac Asimov's science fiction, Rudolf Steiner, Tony Robbins, and neuro-linguistic programming. NXIVM incorporated elements of multi-level marketing and practices from judo, with colored cloth for rank and bowing.<sup>[113][114]</sup>

## Notable NXIVM participants

**Edgar Boone**, the scion of a wealthy family, introduced NXIVM to numerous affluent Mexicans, becoming head of NXIVM-Mexico and rising to third in the NVIXM organization.<sup>[115][116][117][118]</sup>

**Clare Bronfman** is a daughter of billionaire Seagrams chairman Edgar Bronfman Sr. was introduced to NXIVM by her sister Sara. Clare Bronfman was arrested by federal agents on July 24, 2018, in New York City and charged with money laundering and identity theft in connection with NXIVM activities. She pleaded not guilty in the United States District Court for the Eastern District of New York in Brooklyn. She was released on \$100 million bond and placed on house arrest with electronic monitoring.<sup>[119]</sup> On April 19, 2019, Clare Bronfman pleaded guilty to conspiracy to conceal and harbor illegal aliens for financial gain and fraudulent use of identification; she faced 21 to 27 months in prison and has agreed to forfeit \$6 million.<sup>[120][121][122][123]</sup> On September 30, 2020, she was sentenced to six years, nine months in prison by a federal judge.<sup>[10]</sup>



Influences on NXIVM beliefs and practices



**Sara Bronfman** is a daughter of Edgar Bronfman Sr. She was introduced to NXIVM by a family friend in 2002.<sup>[106]</sup>

**Pam Cafritz**<sup>[124][125]</sup> was the daughter of Washington, D.C., socialites Buffy and William Cafritz.<sup>[126]</sup> In the 1990s, she resided with Raniere and Karen Unterreiner in an Albany home. Both Unterreiner and Cafritz signed consent agreements with prosecutors for their role in Consumers' Buyline.<sup>[127]</sup> Cafritz was a founder of JNESS, a Raniere-affiliated women's group. Cafritz was reported to be Raniere's "most important long-term girlfriend".<sup>[128]</sup> On November 7, 2016, Pam Cafritz died. After her death, her credit card was charged for over \$300,000.<sup>[129]</sup>

**Suneel Chakravorty**, a software developer, remained among Raniere's post-conviction followers, dancing outside the jail where Raniere is confined.<sup>[130][131][132][133]</sup>



Canadian actress Nicki Clyne

**Nicki Clyne** is a Canadian actress known for her role on the series *Battlestar Galactica*. According to reports, in 2006, Clyne became involved with NXIVM. In 2008, she reportedly requested to be let out of her contract to focus full-time on NXIVM.<sup>[134]</sup> After Raniere's conviction, Clyne and others began dancing nightly outside the detention center containing Raniere.<sup>[135]</sup>

**Marc Elliot** was diagnosed with Tourette's syndrome at age 9 and later appeared in videos claiming his experience with NXIVM improved his symptoms. Elliot continued his participation after Raniere's conviction, becoming a regular dancer outside Raniere's jail.<sup>[136]</sup>

**Allison Mack** is an American actress known for her role on the series *Smallville*. Mack was reportedly recruited to the Vancouver chapter of NXIVM, along with her *Smallville* co-star Kristin Kreuk.<sup>[137]</sup> Mack was reportedly a founder of DOS, a Raniere-affiliated Master/Slave group. Mack was arrested on April 20, 2018, on charges of sex trafficking, sex trafficking conspiracy, and forced labor conspiracy. Mack pleaded guilty to racketeering charges in April 2019, and was to be sentenced in September 2019. However, on July 15, 2019, the Senior U.S. District Judge Nicholas Garaufis postponed the sentencing until further notice to allow federal probation officials to conduct presentencing investigations.<sup>[138]</sup>



American actress Allison Mack pleaded guilty to racketeering charges in April 2019.

**Brandon Porter, M.D.**, a medical doctor, conducted unlicensed human-subjects research on 200 people for NXIVM. During a "fright study", Porter exposed subjects to disturbing videos, including actual footage of a decapitation.<sup>[139]</sup> In 2016, Porter was present at a NXIVM retreat ("V-Week") where 300 to 400 individuals were struck by an unidentified disease; Porter failed to report the outbreak, in violation of his duties as a licensed medical doctor.<sup>[139]</sup> Porter was stripped of his medical license in 2020.<sup>[140][139][141]</sup>

**Keith Raniere** (born August 26, 1960) is the founder of NXIVM.<sup>[62]</sup> In March 2018, Raniere was arrested and indicted on a variety of charges related to DOS (a "secret sisterhood" within NXIVM), including sex trafficking, sex trafficking conspiracy, and conspiracy to commit forced labor.<sup>[5][69][142]</sup> He was found guilty of all charges at trial.<sup>[143]</sup> On October 27, 2020, Raniere was sentenced to 120 years in prison.<sup>[144][145]</sup>

**Danielle Roberts, D.O.**, a doctor, gained notoriety for having used a cauterizing pen to brand 13 women in connection with the group known as DOS.<sup>[46][18][64][65]</sup> In 2020, New York Board of Medical Conduct began an investigation into Roberts.<sup>[146]</sup> After Raniere's conviction, Roberts was among the dancers outside the jail in which he was incarcerated.<sup>[147]</sup>

**Emiliano Salinas** is a venture capitalist and businessman. He is the son of former Mexican president Carlos Salinas de Gortari. Salinas served as vice president of Prorsus Capital, a financial consortium with ties to Raniere and NXIVM.<sup>[148]</sup>

**Nancy Salzman**, a psychiatric nurse and trained practitioner of hypnotism and neuro-linguistic programming, met Raniere in 1998. The two founded Executive Success Programs, a personal development company<sup>[16]</sup> offering a range of techniques aimed at self-improvement.<sup>[17][18][19]</sup> In March 2019, Salzman pleaded guilty to racketeering.<sup>[149]</sup>

**Karen A. Unterreiner** is a member who became Raniere's live-in partner beginning in the 1980s and an early employee of his company Consumers' Buyline.<sup>[150][151]</sup>

## Critical former members

**Barbara Bouchey** was a client of Nancy Salzman, having been referred to her in 1988. Beginning in 2000, Bouchey dated Raniere. In 2009, Bouchey and eight other women ("The NXIVM Nine") confronted Raniere with concerns about abuse within the organization. That year, Bouchey left the group and later went to law enforcement.<sup>[152]</sup>

**Sarah Edmondson** is a Canadian actress. After leaving NXIVM in early 2017, she publicly denounced the organization, claiming that she was invited into DOS, a substructure within NXIVM operated by Keith Raniere and Allison Mack, and was branded with a combination of Raniere's and Mack's initials at Mack's Albany home.<sup>[153][154][155]</sup> Edmondson showed the brand in a New York Times exposé of NXIVM.<sup>[153]</sup>

**Kristin Keeffe** became Raniere's partner in the early 1990s. In 2013, Keeffe gave birth to Raniere's son Gaelyn.<sup>[156]</sup> In February 2014, Keeffe broke with Raniere and his group. Fleeing the region with her son, an email bearing Keeffe's name explained: "I have full sole legal custody of Gaelyn. Keith was experimenting on him. I had to get Gaelyn away."<sup>[157]</sup> Keeffe publicly described Raniere as "dangerous".<sup>[157]</sup> In 2015, Keeffe alleged that NXIVM leaders had planned to lure critics to Mexico with an invitation to an anti-cult conference; once in Mexico, the critics were to be arrested on false charges by order of a judge who had been bribed.<sup>[158][159][160]</sup>

**Toni Natalie** met Raniere in 1991 when he was pitching his business Consumer's Buyline.<sup>[161]</sup> Natalie and her then-husband became top sellers for the organization.<sup>[161]</sup> Natalie recalled that she was able to stop smoking after a two-hour session with Raniere,<sup>[161]</sup> but this claim is disputed by her ex-husband.<sup>[162]</sup> Natalie and her son later moved to be near Raniere; her marriage ended shortly thereafter. Natalie and Raniere dated for the next eight years.<sup>[161]</sup> In the mid-90s, Raniere and Natalie operated a health-products store.<sup>[24]</sup> In 1999, Raniere's eight-year relationship with Natalie ended. Natalie would subsequently claim to have been the victim of harassment.<sup>[163]</sup> In a January 2003 ruling, federal judge Robert Littlefield implied Raniere was using a legal suit to harass Natalie. Wrote Littlefield: "This matter smacks of a jilted fellow's attempt at revenge or retaliation against his former girlfriend, with many attempts at tripping her up along the way."<sup>[164][161]</sup> In 2011, Natalie filed documents in federal court alleging that she had been repeatedly raped by Raniere.<sup>[161]</sup>



**Joseph J. O'Hara** was an attorney who departed NXIVM in 2005 after accusing the group of misdeeds. In 2007, O'Hara was indicted by Albany County. It was later revealed that the District Attorney had allowed Ranieri's girlfriend Kristin Keffe to operate within its office as a sort of victims' advocate.<sup>[165]</sup> Charges were ultimately dismissed.

**India Oxenberg**, daughter of actress Catherine Oxenberg, was introduced to the group in 2011.<sup>[166]</sup> At Ranieri's trial, a witness testified that India had spent a year on a 500-calorie-per-day diet.<sup>[167]</sup> In May 2017, India admitted to her mother that she was among those who had been branded.<sup>[168]</sup> India left the group in June 2018, after Ranieri's arrest.<sup>[169]</sup> In August 2018, Catherine Oxenberg's book *Captive: A Mother's Crusade to Save Her Daughter from a Terrifying Cult* was published.<sup>[170][171][172]</sup>

**Mark Vicente**, a filmmaker known for the 2004 film *What the Bleep Do We Know!?*, began involvement with the group in 2005. Vicente testified against Ranieri at his 2019 trial.<sup>[173]</sup>

## Journalists and bloggers

**James Odat** is an investigative reporter who wrote for the *Albany Times Union*. In 2012, Odat reported Ranieri's history of pedophilia. In October 2013, Odat was named in a lawsuit filed by NXIVM, along with **Suzanna Andrews** of *Vanity Fair* and blogger John J. Tighe; all had written critically of the group.<sup>[174]</sup> The suit alleged that NXIVM computers had been illegally accessed. Shortly thereafter, Odat was described as being "on leave" from the *Times Union*.<sup>[174]</sup>

**Frank Parlato** was hired by NXIVM in 2007 to help with publicity. After concluding that NXIVM members were being defrauded by Ranieri, Parlato began blogging about the group on his sites ArtVoice, The Niagara Falls Reporter, and The Frank Report.<sup>[175][151]</sup>

**John Tighe** wrote about NXIVM on a blog.<sup>[176]</sup> In 2013, NXIVM accused Tighe of illegally accessing NXIVM servers using a former member's login information. Tighe's home was raided by the New York State Police, and his computer was seized.<sup>[177]</sup> Several months later, State Police announced the discovery of child pornography on Tighe's computer; he was arrested. Facing a possible prison term of 20 years, Tighe pleaded guilty to a single count in exchange for a five-year sentence in federal prison.<sup>[178]</sup>

## Films, documentaries and books

- Investigation Discovery released a two-hour special, *The Lost Women of NXIVM*.<sup>[179]</sup>
- HBO released a docuseries about NXIVM titled *The Vow*; it premiered on August 23, 2020.<sup>[180][181][182][183][184]</sup>
- Starz released a docuseries about NXIVM titled *Seduced: Inside the NXIVM Cult*; it is scheduled to premiere on October 18, 2020.<sup>[185][186]</sup>
- Catherine Oxenberg produced a film for Lifetime about her daughter's experiences with NXIVM.<sup>[187][188]</sup> It is titled *Escaping the NXIVM Cult: A Mother's Fight to Save Her Daughter* and aired on September 21, 2019. While Catherine Oxenberg served as the narrator and executive producer, the film starred Andrea Roth as Catherine Oxenberg, Peter Facinelli as Keith Ranieri, and Sara Fletcher as Allison Mack.<sup>[189]</sup>
- The Program: Inside the Mind of Keith Ranieri and the Rise and Fall of NXIVM* is a book by Toni Natalie and Chet Hardin released on September 24, 2019.<sup>[190][191]</sup>
- Scarred: The True Story of How I Escaped NXIVM, the Cult That Bound My Life* by Sarah Edmondson is a book set that was released on September 17, 2019.<sup>[192]</sup>

- NXIVM was the subject on an episode *E! True Hollywood Story* which featured interviews from several journalists and the people that were once involved with the organization including Catherine Oxenberg, Sarah Edmondson, and actor and Oxenberg's real-life friend Callum Blue.
- Canadian Broadcasting Corporation released a podcast in 2018 on NXIVM as part of CBC season 1 of the series *Uncover*.<sup>[193]</sup>

## NXIVM after Ranieri's conviction

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Beginning in July 2020, at least six NXIVM loyalists were organizing dance protests outside the detention center which houses Ranieri. Operating under the name We Are As You, dancers included actor Nicki Clyne and branding doctor Danielle Roberts.<sup>[135]</sup>

While incarcerated, Ranieri has maintained his leadership role over NXIVM, regularly communicating with his followers by phone. Ranieri instructed his followers to solicit the assistance of Alan Dershowitz, the attorney who successfully negotiated a non-prosecution agreement of Jeffrey Epstein.<sup>[194]</sup> Ranieri gave false names of people he was allegedly calling to prison officials, and call recipients employed "burner phones" in an attempt to avoid detection. In one instance, Ranieri instructed a follower to "get scrutiny" on the judge in his case, explaining that "the judge needs to know he's being watched".<sup>[130]</sup>

On September 25, 2020, NXIVM leader Suneel Chakravorty emailed prosecutors a demand that they sign or deny a Ranieri-authored "ethics affidavit", giving prosecutors a "5pm Wednesday" deadline for response. The demand, addressing five individual prosecutors by name, threatens "provocative public actions that bring hidden transgressions to light and send a message to judges, prosecutors, and federal agents that they answer to us."<sup>[195][196]</sup> Simultaneously, a team of 10 individuals descended on the U.S. attorney's office to deliver the demand in person; at that same time, another individual attempted to deliver a package to a former Ranieri prosecutor at her law firm.<sup>[197]</sup>

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## External links

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- Website (<https://web.archive.org/web/20180421090811/http://www.keithraniere.com/>) of Keith Raniere
- Three critical articles pertaining to the *NXIVM v. Ross Institute* lawsuit (<http://www.scs.cmu.edu/~dst/NXIVM/>)
- *Times Union* Special Report on NXIVM (<http://www.timesunion.com/nxivm/>)
- [WeAreTheForgottenOnes.org](http://www.WeAreTheForgottenOnes.org) (<http://www.WeAreTheForgottenOnes.org>) (redirect target of [WeAreAsYou.com](http://www.weareasyou.com) (<http://www.weareasyou.com>)), website for Raniere followers who demonstrate

outside of his detention center<sup>[1][2]</sup>

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