



U.S. Department of Justice

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PRESS RELEASE

JURY FINDS NXIVM LEADER KEITH RANIERE GUILTY OF ALL COUNTS

Raniere and His Co-Conspirators Operated a Racketeering Enterprise Victimizing Women Through Sex Trafficking and Other Crimes

Keith Raniere, the founder and leader of Nxivm, was convicted today by a federal jury in Brooklyn of all seven counts of a superseding indictment charging him with racketeering and racketeering conspiracy; sex trafficking, attempted sex trafficking and sex trafficking conspiracy; forced labor conspiracy and wire fraud conspiracy. The racketeering offense included predicate acts of extortion, identity theft, and production and possession of child pornography. The verdict followed more than six weeks of trial before United States District Judge Nicholas G. Garaufis. When sentenced, Raniere faces a mandatory minimum of 15 years' imprisonment, and up to life in prison.

Richard P. Donoghue, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of New York, William F. Sweeney, Jr., Assistant Director-in-Charge, Federal Bureau of Investigation, New York Field Office (FBI), and Jonathan D. Larsen, Special Agent-in-Charge, Internal Revenue Service-Criminal Investigation (IRS-CI), announced the verdict.

"As found by the jury, Keith Raniere masqueraded as a self-help guru to gain the trust of his followers, and then exploited them for his own financial gain and sexual gratification," stated United States Attorney Donoghue. "Raniere and his co-conspirators will now face the consequences for the serious crimes they committed and the profound harm they have caused their victims." Mr. Donoghue extended his grateful appreciation to Homeland Security Investigations, the New York State Police and the United States Attorney's Office for the Northern District of New York for their assistance during the investigation and prosecution.

"Nxivm's so called self-help programs did anything but help the women they professed to empower," stated FBI Assistant Director-in-Charge Sweeney. "What's been proven today is that Keith Raniere preyed on the vulnerabilities of his many female victims, sold them lies and other falsehoods, and committed horrifying acts of coercion. This guilty verdict is a

welcome end to a case that highlighted the many avenues of criminal activity pursued by a man whose intentions were deplorable beyond belief.”

“IRS Criminal Investigation plays a pivotal role in tracing the illicit funds from such horrendous criminal behavior,” stated IRS-CI Special Agent-in-Charge Larsen. “We proudly stand with our law enforcement partners in uncovering such crimes, and justice has been served.”

As proven at trial, in 2003, Raniere founded Nxivm, a purported self-help organization headquartered in Albany, New York, with centers operating elsewhere in the United States, Mexico and Canada. Raniere established Executive Success Programs (“ESP”), a series of purported self-help workshops in which participants paid thousands of dollars to attend classes based on Raniere’s teachings. In 2015, Raniere added a secret society within Nxivm called DOS or “The Vow,” with levels of women “slaves” headed by “masters.” The goal of the criminal enterprise was to promote Raniere, for example, by exalting his teachings and ideology, and to recruit new members, including as sexual partners for Raniere.

In the course of their racketeering enterprise, Raniere and his co-conspirators committed multiple crimes, including sex trafficking, forced labor, computer hacking, fraud and identity theft. Raniere maintained command and control over his DOS members by collecting “collateral” from them, such as sexually explicit photos and letters making accusations against their loved ones that would be embarrassing if disclosed. For example, “Nicole,” a victim witness, testified that she was coerced into providing labor and services for Nxivm, which included taking photographs of naked women members and engaging in sex acts with Raniere, under threat of release of her collateral. DOS slaves were also branded with Raniere’s initials in their pelvic area using a cauterizing pen. The members of the “inner circle” were rewarded with financial opportunities and increased power and status within the enterprise.

Raniere and his co-conspirators also worked to support Raniere and protect Nxivm from perceived enemies. Raniere conspired with two of his closest associates in Nxivm to have “Daniela,” a member of his inner circle at the time, cross the Canadian border into the U.S. with a fake identification card bearing the name of a dead woman. Daniela testified that she assisted Raniere hack into the email accounts of persons he believed were enemies of Nxivm.

Among Raniere’s crimes was sexual exploitation of a child and possession of child pornography. Specifically, Raniere began having sex with a victim member identified as “Camila” when she was 15-years-old and he was 45. Raniere also took naked photographs of Camila when she was a minor.

Each of Raniere’s co-defendants previously pleaded guilty. On March 12, 2019, Nancy Salzman, Nxivm’s president and co-founder, pleaded guilty to racketeering conspiracy. On March 25, 2019, Lauren Salzman, a first-line master over slaves in DOS, pleaded guilty to racketeering and racketeering conspiracy. On April 8, 2019, Allison Mack, a first-line master, pleaded guilty to racketeering and racketeering conspiracy. On April 19, 2019, Clare Bronfman, a high-ranking member of Nxivm’s Executive Board, pleaded guilty to conspiracy to conceal and harbor illegal aliens for financial gain, and fraudulent use of identification documents, and Kathy Russell, Nxivm’s bookkeeper, pleaded guilty to visa fraud. They are awaiting sentencing.

The government's case is being handled by the Office's Organized Crime and Gangs Section. Assistant United States Attorneys Moira Kim Penza, Tanya Hajjar, Mark J. Lesko and Kevin M. Trowel are in charge of the prosecution. Assistant United States Attorney Karin Orenstein of the Office's Civil Division is handling forfeiture matters.

The Defendant:

KEITH RANIERE (also known as "Vanguard" and "Grandmaster")
Age: 58
Waterford, New York

The Defendants Who Previously Pleaded Guilty:

CLARE BRONFMAN
Age: 40
Clifton Park, New York

ALLISON MACK
Age: 36
Brooklyn, New York

KATHY RUSSELL
Age: 61
Clifton Park, New York

LAUREN SALZMAN
Age: 43
Clifton Park, New York

NANCY SALZMAN (also known as "Prefect")
Age: 65
Clifton Park, New York

E.D.N.Y. Docket No. 18-CR-204 (S-2) (NGG)