

# Metroland

February 22, 2010

## Ex-NXIVM associate Barbara Bouchey and the private investigator

Barbara Bouchey had been a longtime supporter of NXIVM and its founder, Keith Raniere. In 2003, the local financial planner defended the organization to Paul Post in an article in the *Saratogian*. The article was the typical "Is it, or is it not, a cult?" straw man kinda thing (that we all have written) and Bouchey was emphatic in her support of NXIVM:



One of the program supporters is businesswoman Barbara Bouchey of Saratoga Springs, who hosts a satellite school for the firm. "It's a program with results that people have never experienced before," Bouchey said. "People can't explain it."

Bouchey said taking the course has improved her business considerably. She said she's now able to teach an asset management course in less than 10 hours that previously took 60.

"Revenues were up 35 percent the first year, and my employees have never been happier," she said. "That's human potential. That's success."

(Anyone reading this who doesn't know what NXIVM is, go here and browse.)

Whether or not she has changed her mind on the usefulness of NXIVM's training is not publicly known, as she is refusing to speak to the press, but it's safe to say that seven years later Bouchey's take on Raniere has darkened. She has left NXIVM, an organization that she helped to build, under what appears to be hostile circumstances. Her deposition is one of the cornerstones in the motion filed by Natasha and Yuri Plyam of California against Raniere et al.

The Plyams allege that Raniere orchestrated a plot to deceive them into signing a contract that would hand over a controlling interest in the real-estate venture, Precision Development, to Nxians Sara and Clare Bronfmans. The original deal, according to the Plyams, was they shared in a three-way co-ownership of the company with the Bronfmans and NXIVM president Nancy Salzman.

It's a complicated case that can be summed up by these **allegations**: "Cult leader" and volleyball enthusiast Keith "Vanguard" Raniere conned the winsome and generous heiresses of the Seagram's fortune into opening up their trust funds to his whims. His whim could be to gamble tens of millions on pig futures or whatever, or his whim could be to convince the girls to invest the start-up funds needed to launch Precision.

After burning through tens of millions on commodities, however, Raniere found that the Bronfmans' money was starting to run a little less liquid, according to the lawsuit, and he had to choose: He could either continue supporting the Plyams' real-estate ambitions, which hinged on the Bronfmans' money, or he could continue his experiments in the commodities market, which hinged on the Bronfmans' money. But he couldn't do both.

It was Bouchey who oversaw the management of the Bronfmans' money during this time, and that's why she was deposed in the Plyams' suit. And her claims about Raniere are crushing. It's through her deposition that the foundation is laid for the allegations that Raniere is a compulsive gambler who burned through a chunk of the Bronfmans' inheritance.

According to multiple sources, Bouchey isn't very popular among the Nxian-set.

Meanwhile, Bouchey's name has turned up in another, wholly unrelated lawsuit involving Raniere's premiere benefactors, the Bronfman sisters.

In that case, which is playing itself out in United States Bankruptcy Court, Sara and Clare have filed an adversary proceeding against a former NXIVM employee, Joseph O'Hara. The sisters are claiming that O'Hara, who is seeking

bankruptcy protection, violated the terms of a \$2 million loan (by not paying it back) that they had floated him while he was still employed by NXIVM.

Bouchey makes her appearance in that case in a "motion for a protective order" filed by O'Hara's lawyer. What this motion is claiming is that the Bronfmans' attorney has engaged in an "extraordinary level" of abusive discovery in subpoenaing four people who have nothing to do with the O'Hara case. These four people, the motion claims, do not know O'Hara or have any insight into the proceedings surrounding his bankruptcy claim or his loan from the Bronfmans. They do, however, know Bouchey.

According to the motion, these four individuals—Angela Ucci, Melanie Button, Robert Petro and Kathleen Ethier—were targeted and harassed by a private detective, Steven Rambam, who claimed to be investigating a variety of allegations made against Bouchey. In their affidavits, Button, Ucci, and Petro describe multiple "intimidating" encounters with Rambam.

According to sources, this is the same Steven Rambam who is the CEO of security services firm Pallorium, which claims to do business in the United States, Canada, Israel and Hong Kong. You can check out his Web site here: [pallorium.com](http://pallorium.com). According to articles available on that site, Rambam is an internationally known private investigator who has been involved in many high-profile cases, such as the trial of convicted Nazi war criminal, Julius Viel. He is also the muse for a series of Kinky Friedman novels.

According to O'Hara's motion, these four associates of Bouchey's had been warned that Rambam was investigating her and might try to interrogate them as well. So when Rambam came to the door of Robert Petro, a 70-year-old minister, Petro wasn't too surprised. In fact, Petro recognized him.

The summary of Robert Petro's affidavit: Rambam came to his door and showed him identification. Rambam was accompanied by a woman. He told Petro that he was not with NXIVM or Raniere, but rather that he worked for an attorney in California who he wouldn't identify. "He came off incredibly like an official kind of investigator," the affidavit reads. "He said I know everything about you . . . everything . . . with a certain look on his face . . . and I said . . . well that is good . . . he felt very intimidating to me when he said that . . . and I felt from the onset that things were inaccurate, intimidating, and he was fishing and had nothing substantial." Rambam leveled vague allegations against Petro and Bouchey, claiming that she had misappropriated \$40 million and had breached the Bronfmans' confidentiality. At one point, Rambam threatened that he would have Petro arrested and drawn into a lawsuit if he didn't tell him what he wanted to know.

The alleged second time Rambam came to Petro's door, he tried to get Petro to sign a document. Petro said that he refused.

Melanie Button, who was Bouchey's assistant for 14 years, claimed in her affidavit that Rambam approached her at 9:10 in the evening as she was pulling into her parking lot. She was frightened by the man she recognized as a private investigator.

She claimed that Rambam attempted to ask her questions about files that Bouchey had "transferred." She said that she didn't know what he was talking about and that she was "pissed" by his intrusion, and abruptly broke off the encounter and escaped into her house. "I then watched from my window until they pulled out of my driveway . . . I was upset and I thought to myself . . . who does he think he is? Parking in a lot late at night trying to find out information about my boss . . . He came across being very authoritative and felt threatening."

Button claimed that Rambam was seen in the lot a number of times throughout the next couple weeks. According to O'Hara's motion, Rambam threatened Button that he would "see her in court."

According to O'Hara's motion, Kathleen Ethier claimed that Rambam "has been taking pictures of her house and car and hiding behind cars outside her home."

In her affidavit, Angela Ucci claimed that she had had a number of encounters with Rambam. The first was at her salon where she works as a stylist. It was at 8 in the evening, and she refused to speak with him. The second time he

came to her work, the doors were locked and she hid from him. Ucci also claimed that she was contacted by an associate who warned her that she might go to jail if she didn't cooperate.

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## Comments



It boggles the mind that this Vanguard pimp - and his front woman (no pun intended), Nurse Nancy, are still getting away with this kind of crap. Are all of the Fed and State investigators too busy to take a look at them - or has the Bronfmans money bought them immunity?

Posted by: Former NXIVM Student | [February 23, 2010 at 12:53 PM](#)



Money can buy much. The whole world is corrupt. When frauds like Ranieri can get away with stuff, celebrities join in the fun, the whole world is fu|

Posted by: anonymous | [February 27, 2010 at 01:32 AM](#)



That Vanguard is soooooo dreamy!

How do I join his harem?

Posted by: Spoiled rich girl with self confidence and Daddy issues | [March 09, 2010 at 01:43 PM](#)



This is the first time I heard this one, Reniere is such a scumbag.

Posted by: [Justin](#) | [April 05, 2010 at 06:23 PM](#)



Vanguards followers must not read any thing about him.If even 1/10 is true that is in the public legal documents than Justin is right and Vanguard is a scumbag. How can his people still follow him. Are they sheep? Are they blind? Do they read? "Stupid is what stupid does" Forrest Gump

Posted by: Boggles my mind | [April 09, 2010 at 01:10 PM](#)



It's mechanisms of devotion, shame & guilt techniques, and a good deal of artfully tailored propaganda making this all look like a big conspiracy, not necessarily against Ranieri himself, but in fact against the espians (members of NXIVM/ESP) and their (actually in truth mostly well-intended and honourable) goals and dreams. This is what they see now, not his potential faults, but the non-espians, the so-called 'suppressives' and 'shifters' attempts at 'destroying values', at stopping them from doing good by bringing everybody Ranieri's (ostensibly NXIVM's) 'world ethics'.

It is a standard tactic in any form of information control, the induced shift in perception: if you can't prevent them from seeing the news, make the news seem like the propaganda of an all out attack orchestrated by a long-defined group of archetypal

archenemies.

Posted by: [Macumazahn](#) | [April 11, 2010 at 03:49 PM](#)



Barbara Bouchey is one of the inspiring women. she gives an example of her braveness here. but some scumbag people never understand this fact.

Posted by: [Mobile Surveillance](#) | [May 31, 2010 at 05:59 AM](#)



Bouchey is simply an exemplification of "no honor among thieves". She was more than happy to go along with Ranieri's schemes while he was manipulating others, until she got screwed over herself. It seems like making amends for her collusion is simply a side effect of regaining her losses. Regardless, this a case where the house should be burned down from the inside.

Posted by: [haa](#) | [June 11, 2010 at 06:17 PM](#)



It always amazes me how people will continue to follow and support someone like Vanguard who seems to be so completely...nuts.

Posted by: [Miami private investigator JRS](#) | [August 02, 2010 at 10:24 PM](#)

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