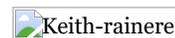


## Metroland

March 22, 2010

### They may be crazy

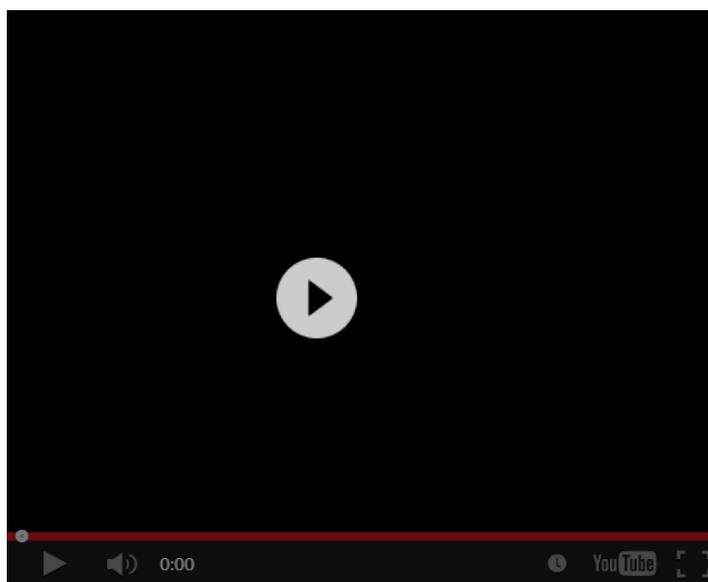


#### And now, for the stunning results of Nxivm.

A clip of Simply Human performing "Crazy" has been floating around the interwebs for awhile now, but this weekend I became totally obsessed with it after it popped up again [in a thread](#) on Rick Ross' Web site. Simply Human is the a cappella group founded by Keith Ranieri, "noted scientist, mathematician, philosopher, entrepreneur, educator, inventor and author."

In February 2007, Keith called together six of his musical friends and founded Simply Human, an innovative a cappella performing group. The group, **buttressed by the musical applications of Rational Inquiry™** manifested unusual development of humanitarian, expressive and artistic values inspiring in Keith the idea 'a cappella is best shared.' Three months later, Keith conceptualized the creation of A Cappella Innovations, a non-profit organization seeking to advance music, the arts, expression and humanity through the a cappella genre.

Rational Inquiry is the "technology" at the center of Executive Success Programs; ESP is the original education wing of the Nxivm empire. Wonder what Rational Inquiry is all about? Download the 240-page patent application [here](#).



Simply Human's performance took place at the first A Cappella Innovations-sponsored weekend of college a cappella troops singing for and studying with Nxians. It was emceed by TV celebs Nicki Clyne, Allison Mack and Kristin Kreuk. [Here](#) you can listen as Mack and Kreuk, both from Smallville, explain what a cappella music means to them. With a straight face.

A Cappella Innovations hosted two of these weekend conferences, one in 2007 (which the Simply Human clip is from) and one in 2008. College groups from across the country traveled to Albany to perform at the Egg and attend seminars. There were "judges" and special guest performers.

After the 2008 event, [a thread](#) on the Recorded A Cappella Review Board forum was started by a kid who claimed that he had participated in both years' weekends. "When we attended the first festival in the fall of 2007, it was a productive experience, which is why we decided to return this spring after being invited back. We immediately noticed several changes in format." The writer goes on to say that in 2008, the organizers had included a program "extensive references to Keith Ranieri's 'patent-pending technology', Rational Inquiry." Also, there were "insistent requests for our personal information, including e-mail and home addresses, as well as Social Security numbers."

While the a cappella groups gave each other constructive, musically-oriented criticism, the moderators repeatedly attempted to steer our conversations to more existential topics, confusing some of us and unnerving others. ... Constant surveillance, including intrusive photography and video recording, even during 'down time', when we and the other groups present were simply talking between ourselves.

...

The entire atmosphere was drastically different than that of the first festival, and our group, as well as every other group with which we discussed these concerns, feels very unsettled. Mr. Ranieri and members of the a cappella group he founded, Simply Human, have posted on this board in the past. We welcome their response to this post, considering the numerous questions that remain unanswered.

Throughout the lengthy thread, people who participated in the events discussed what they'd read about Nxivm, what they'd experienced during the weekends, etc. Posters identifying themselves as members of Nxivm--Clare Bronfman, Siobahn Hotaling, Eric Mumford, Allison Mack, Nicki Clyne, and Lauren Salzman--eventually jumped into the fray, presenting their own set of "data."

Hotaling, a member of Simply Human:

. . .to lump in your feedback with some concerns about people's affiliations with an organization such as NXIVM is a non-sequitur and therefore unnecessary. That said, yes, I AM affiliated with NXIVM and in fact work for the organization; it is nothing that I have ever hidden from anyone that I have come into contact with in A Cappella Innovations and I have shared when asked and when it was appropriate (i.e. when people ask me what I do for a living, blah blah blah....) In fact, it is something I am actually quite proud of. I have known Keith for 8 years and consider him to be a good friend; indeed, one of the most modest, unassuming, and humane individuals I have ever met. I believe that his intentions are nothing but good and pro-active towards the a cappella community. **For those of you who have seen my group perform, I also truly believe that my capacity to be an expressive performer is due to the work I have done with NXIVM.**

On page 11, it even appears that the hyper-reclusive Raniere chimed in:

I will say as emphatically as I can online: None of this was to recruit people for Nxivm. In fact, we used our contacts through Nxivm to extensively recruit for the a cappella community. Our next step was to bring a cappella into corporations (these are corporations in which we have contacts through Nxivm.) Our goal was to have 6 major corporations with groups at the next festival. Are we trying to "get-into" these corporations for Nxivm? No, we already are! We are using the "Nxivm friendly" corporations for a cappella. For many reasons Nxivm is not good for many people it: is too intellectual; requires too much time and effort; is too expensive; has bad PR; has an objectionable delivery system; is too hard or too restrictive to get into (yes, we reject entry to various categories of people.) A cappella is something everyone can do and, I believe, builds humanity. What is the goal of Nxivm? Answer: To build humanity in the world by ethically, philosophically and educationally inspiring the leaders of the world. A cappella also builds humanity more from simplicity upward. Nxivm and a cappella both share the same goal (I think) but from opposite ends of the complexity spectrum.

It's a good read, if you are in to that sort of thing.

Anyway, there's no doubt that Simply Human is one of Raniere's pet projects. And, arguably, it's unlikely that Simply Human could ever have drawn an audience of hundreds of a cappella fans to the Egg without Nxivm. But what does that mean? Not that Raniere coached Simply Human into being an a cappella group that could, on its own merit, draw a large crowd. I'm no expert on a cappella, but come on. No way. (No offense Simply Human, you should hear *my* version of Crazy.) What Raniere, and Nxivm, did do for Simply Human was facilitate an illusion--by recruiting an audience of hundreds and bringing it to Albany, and then by putting Simply Human in front of it. Nxivm gave Simply Human a *Fantasy Island* moment.

Which is one good way to think about Nxivm: a fantasy island created by Raniere and sustained by rich people because it makes them all feel good about themselves. And what could possibly go wrong with that?

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Posted by [Chet Hardin](#) at 05:18 PM in [Newsfront](#) | [Permalink](#) [ShareThis](#)

## Comments



Come on Nicki Cline from Battlestar Galactica, Allison Mack and Kristin Kreuk from Smallville. They are all involved in NXIVM and were before the festival. Rumor has it Nicki moved to Albany to be with the in crowd of NXIVM followers and Allison visits often. Hopefully Kristin has moved on to better things but rumor has it her boyfriend Mark Hildreth is still deeply involved and both Allison Mack and Mark Hildreth coach and the new NXIVM center in Vancouver BC. They were recruited by multi-cult follower Mark Vicente who did the cult infomercial movie for JZ Knight and what is considered a cult Ramatha. Mark Vicente jumped ship from Ramatha and joined the cult like group NXIVM. Just like some people go from relationship to relationship without considering what is wrong - Mark Vicente seems to go from cult like group to cult like group

Posted by: What The | [March 22, 2010 at 08:48 PM](#)



nxivm ho's are the key to the palace. pick which one you desire; and a \$\$\$ tag is attached to each  
it IS a good selection i might add

Posted by: The Horndog | [March 23, 2010 at 12:29 AM](#)



Hey where's the love baby,you poached that link from me. just some credit were credit is due.  
<http://sarotogaindecline.blogspot.com/2010/03/nxivm-training-manual.html>

Posted by: [ben lives on](#) | [March 23, 2010 at 07:55 PM](#)



Seriously, Ben? You really wanna start this with me?

I linked exactly to where I got the patent application from--the Rick Ross Web site forum. The question is, where did you get it from? Since you didn't link, I am guessing that you found it in your extensive research rather than "poaching" it from the same place I did?

Posted by: [Chet Hardin](#) | [March 23, 2010 at 08:10 PM](#)



Sorry chief. I got my link from here

[http://www.wipo.int/pctdb/en/wads.jsp?](http://www.wipo.int/pctdb/en/wads.jsp)

[IA=US2000040818&LANGUAGE=EN&ID=09006361801399b5&VOL=27&DOC=0068d1&WO=02/021481&WEEK=NA&TYPE=NA&DOC\\_TYPE=PDOC&PAGE=99](http://www.wipo.int/pctdb/en/wads.jsp?IA=US2000040818&LANGUAGE=EN&ID=09006361801399b5&VOL=27&DOC=0068d1&WO=02/021481&WEEK=NA&TYPE=NA&DOC_TYPE=PDOC&PAGE=99)

lighten up I run a zero budget unpaid operation.

Not a single escort or dial a date advertiser.

Strictly volunteers.

So my apology.

Posted by: [ben lives on](#) | [March 23, 2010 at 11:42 PM](#)



Hmm. I remember the first "A Cappella Innovations" in 2007. I took a couple of photos:

<http://flic.kr/p/4bg3Tg>

<http://flic.kr/p/4bk5cu>

As you can see, it wasn't that packed. It was only after I shelled out \$20 and sat down that I noticed the big banner behind the stage, proudly quoting Keith Ranieri. Needless to say, though the show was OK, I was really unhappy I had accidentally "sponsored" this organization.

I had been aware of NXIVM for some time now (after discovering a few of my "social friends" were members), and it was pretty clear most of the bands they had invited had no clue about this umbrella either; I watched with amusement the mystery unfold on rarb.org later on.

Now I haven't much respect for NXIVM, and I'm on my toes when I interact with its members, but I'd like to tone down the conspiracy a bit here; you can legitimately doubt "Simply Human" is a cover, but really, it's not that bad. I know a few of them, and they just wanted to get the ball rolling with the project, do something new; I actually enjoyed watching a friend progress until the day of the performance. And Mike Baker, in the background of the video, is actually a great musician.

I guess I'm stating the obvious here, but this cult is not a total disaster: sure thing, Vanguard and Prefect deserve to be put in the spotlight, but walking down the pyramid, there isn't a legion of drones. Some of them are well adjusted, and I've been to a few parties without them pressuring me to join (they'll try at some point, though).

Posted by: [-S](#) | [March 24, 2010 at 04:08 PM](#)



Neat photos, S. Thanks.

I wasn't at the 2007 event, but I was at the 2008 show. It was packed. Maybe I am not remembering correctly, but the theater was nearly filled.

I'm not trying to say anything about Simply Human as people. I've met Mike, and I liked him. He seemed friendly as hell. Most of the people involved with Nxvim, currently or in the past, that I have met have been sane, intelligent and friendly.

And I'm all for toning down the conspiracy, but as far as the concerns that A Cappella Innovations was a cover for Nxvim, you're gonna have to take that up with the kids on the RARB forum.

Posted by: [Chet Hardin](#) | [March 24, 2010 at 05:17 PM](#)

The comments to this entry are closed.