

Despite Pressure, Leah Remini Will Not Bow to Scientology Threats

Leah Remini's Scientology docuseries will not only be returning to A&E, but it'll be getting an extra two episodes.

Variety has confirmed that *Leah Remini: Scientology and the Aftermath* has received a 10-episode Season 2 order. The network is looking for a summer debut.

The series has been a boon for A&E, with critical praise and strong numbers tuning in for Remini's road trip to talk to former Scientologists who detail cases of emotional and physical abuse while members of the Church of Scientology.

Remini left the church in 2013 after being part of it for nearly 30 years, her departure coming a few years after producer Paul Haggis' high-profile split with the church and just months after the publication of Lawrence Wright's *Going Clear: Scientology, Hollywood and the Prison of Belief*, which served as the basis for Haggis' HBO documentary of the same name. Remini came out with a memoir, *Troublemaker: Surviving Hollywood and Scientology*, in 2015.

"It became clear to us that although we were telling painful stories of former members of the Church of Scientology, this show was resonating strongly with people everywhere. The show is really about standing up for what is right and not letting bullies have their way," Remini said.

"I feel it is important for people to know that you can take action to bring about change, both for yourself and for others. Our intention is to send a clear message to abusers that they will not go unchecked and will not be permitted to continue harming people without being questioned and

challenged. We have been deluged with messages from those who have stories to tell who feel the show is a forum where their voices can be heard. We have been overwhelmed with support from well-wishers and fans of the show from around the world. But most importantly, we felt compelled to proceed with another season to continue to reveal truths and seek justice for all victims.”

The Church of Scientology has vigorously denied all of the claims made by the former members, and in Season 1, A&E ran cards before each segment of the show that contain statements from the church that disputing the veracity of the stories in the show and Remini’s own story, painting her and the alleged victims as bitter apostates.

A&E even set up a site to post the Church’s complete responses, and the Church of Scientology has also set up its own website to respond to the stories told in the program, in addition to issuing a statement alleging Remini attempted to extort large sums of money from the church.

After A&E scrapped docuseries *Escaping the KKK: A Documentary Series Exposing Hate in America* when it learned producers of that series paid participants—in violation of policy for that show—the church lashed out at the network, saying that the subjects on *Leah Remini: Scientology and the Aftermath* are paid.

Leah Remini: Scientology and the Aftermath is produced for A&E Network by the Intellectual Property Corporation (IPC). Executive producers for IPC are Eli Holzman and Aaron Saidman. Leah Remini serves as executive producer for her No Seriously Productions. Executive producers for A&E Network are Devon Hammonds, Amy Savitsky and Elaine Frontain Bryant.

Remini, who also just booked a lead role on NBC’s *What About Barb?* pilot, is represented by APA, which packaged the project, art2perform and Hirsch Wallerstein Hayum Matlof

Fishman. {eoa}