

The News-Sentinel

FORT WAYNE, INDIANA

At massage parlors, image fits

By ELLEN BUGHER
Of The News-Sentinel

The arrest of five women at three city massage parlors last week may confirm what many people assume happens in such businesses.

The News-Sentinel has examined what happens in massage parlors and asked police about problems they face enforcing prostitution laws.

Undercover Fort Wayne police officers arrested the women on misdemeanor prostitution charges. The arrests were the first involving massage parlors in a year.

While many people think of massage parlors as fronts for prostitution, the people who run them say they don't deserve the sex-for-sale stereotype.

A News-Sentinel reporter visited four of Fort Wayne's seven licensed massage

■ Reporter's visits detailed. Page 7A

parlors during early October and found that in each case, the image fit.

One of those visited was among the three where arrests were made.

At each place the reporter visited, massagists offered sex acts or nude displays.

The New-Sentinel also found that there are two kinds of massage for sale in Fort Wayne.

Massage therapists who consider themselves legitimate complain about their profession being stigmatized by shady images of selling sexual favors.

Ironically, they often operate underground and unlicensed to avoid being typecast as prostitutes. The four parlors visited by The News-Sentinel, where sex acts were offered in apparent violation

of city ordinance and state law, are licensed by the city.

Legitimate massage therapists want the city ordinance, which requires massagists to register with the vice squad, changed.

But police and City Council officials say it is difficult to separate legitimate therapists from their parlor counterparts.

They say adding exceptions to the city massage parlor ordinance will weaken the city's ability to control massage parlors and make arrests even more difficult.

Fort Wayne police face problems in making arrests because of restrictions on how far they can go with parlor massagists to uncover violations.

The News-Sentinel found that a customer must to some extent go along with an offer to know what really goes on.

City policy hinders law enforcement

By ELLEN BUGHER of the News-Sentinel
Prohibiting activities that Allen County Prosecutor Stephen Sims calls "morally unpalatable" has hampered enforcement efforts against city massage parlors.

Last week undercover police officers arrested five women at the common suspicion about what "really" happens in a massage parlor, but Coleman said that un-

The arrests may confirm the common suspicion about what "really" happens in a massage parlor, but Coleman said that un-

"We're limited in terms of what we can do as law enforcement officers — that's the problem," Coleman said.

Riemen said the increased communication with Sims' office is one reason there are more prostitution arrests coming out of the massage parlors.

More on massage
In Monday's News-Sentinel:
Many trained massage therapists operate as if they were illegal — and they are unless certified and don't advertise.

About the visits

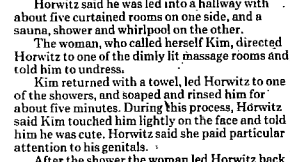
By TONY HORWITZ and ELLEN BUGHER of the News-Sentinel
As part of The News-Sentinel's investigation of the massage business, reporter Tony Horwitz visited four local massage parlors.

Horwitz was sent to find out what services, beyond those advertised, these establishments offered customers.

Horwitz agreed to undress at all places visited and consented to nude displays by masseuses. At no point did he solicit sexual acts.

All visits were made in the afternoon and paid for with cash provided by The News-Sentinel.

News-Sentinel reporter Ellen Bugher contacted by telephone the owners of the massage parlors visited before Horwitz's visits.



Oriental Health Spa

Address: 821 Coliseum Blvd. W.
Before the visit: A woman who identified herself as Sun Pak, the manager, said: "Everybody comes here for a massage. We do not have any sex here or prostitution. We just give good massages."

The visit: A woman dressed in a one-piece bathing suit asked Horwitz if he wanted a massage. He said he did and paid \$30 for 30 minutes.

Horwitz said he was led into a hallway with about five curtained rooms, each with a sofa and a sauna, shower and whirlpool on the other.

The woman, who called herself Kim, directed Horwitz to one of the dimly lit massage rooms and told him to undress.

Kim returned with a towel, led Horwitz to one of the showers, and soaped and rinsed him for about five minutes. During this process, Horwitz said Kim touched him lightly on the face and told him he was cute.

After the shower the woman led Horwitz back to the stall where he'd undressed and told him to lie naked on the massage table.

The visit: Lady Scandia is housed in a wooden building that appears to double as a private home.

As Horwitz entered, Kathy appeared in a thigh-length bathrobe and asked the wanted a massage. He chose a \$40 "Oriental massage" which included a half-hour oil rub and a half-hour "bubble bath massage."

Kathy led Horwitz into a large room and told him to undress. She returned a minute later in a skimpy bathrobe and began rubbing his back and legs with oil.

After about 20 minutes, she led him into another room with shower equipment. Horwitz reclined on a table that she said felt like a giant sponge, and Kathy began spraying him with water and rubbing his back with soap.

Horwitz told her he only had \$5. She said she could "do a topeless for that," adding "it's been a real slow day."

After rubbing his chest and legs for a few minutes with soap, she asked, "Soap irritate you?" Horwitz said it didn't, and the woman immediately began massaging his genitals.

After the visit: Owner Renee West said that if sexual services are offered, it is without her consent or knowledge. She said she cannot regulate what goes on behind the closed doors of massage rooms.

Ultimate One Inc.

Address: 3615 N. Clinton St.
Before the visit: Dave Pettit, manager of Ultimate One, said, "I've got the only place in town that has all the requirements" of the city ordinance that prohibits, among other things, touching of genitals in massage parlors.

The visit: Horwitz visited Ultimate One twice and in both instances, was offered "extras," including intercourse.

On his first visit, Horwitz was greeted in the lobby by three young women eating pizza. An older woman explained the variety of massages available — ranging from a \$25 lotion rub to a \$50 Japanese or Oriental massage — and said he had his choice of the three women.

Horwitz paid \$30 for a hot tub massage, including a lotion massage and a visit to the hot tub with one of the girls.

A tall blond-haired woman identified as Vanessa told Horwitz to undress and meet her in the hot tub. When Vanessa reappeared, she had changed into a bikini and asked Horwitz to "scoot over" in the tub.

On his second visit the same day, Horwitz paid \$25 for a lotion massage from a woman identified as Ann. He was again led to one of the massage rooms and told to undress.

She collected the money before taking off her shirt. "Why don't we begin with a hug?" she said, embracing Horwitz before he could answer.

Five minutes into what Horwitz described as "a very amateurish rub," Ann said, "In case you were wondering, a hand job is included free with the massage if you want it."

A few minutes later, she asked if she had permission to "rub here," indicating his genitals. Horwitz declined. She didn't object but indicated that the massage was over.

Horwitz asked if "the special ending" ever included "rub here" the first time. Horwitz said "I don't usually tell first-time customers, because you could be armp," she said.

After the visit: Pettit was told what Horwitz encountered during his two visits to Ultimate One. "Nothing surprises me," he said.



The Honeyuckle Health Club

Address: 3402 Wayne Trace
The Honeyuckle was not contacted before the visit about what kind of services were available.

The reporter asked a woman who answered the telephone: "Do you have a foot around with the customer or anything like that?"

The visit: Horwitz entered what he said looked like the living room of a private home. A man sat at one end watching television and told Horwitz to take a shower until "the girls" returned.

Two women clad in tight jeans entered the room, and one asked Horwitz if he wanted a massage. Horwitz asked for an explanation of the rubs listed on a sign on the wall.

Horwitz undressed and sat on the table until Amber returned with some lotion. She asked him to lie on his stomach and began rubbing his back, buttocks and legs while they talked about Fort Wayne and the massage business.

Horwitz asked what she meant, but she didn't answer, just laughed. Horwitz said if it would cost anything extra, and she said no.

She began a genital massage, and after about 10 seconds Horwitz asked her to stop. She did without complaint. As she was leaving, the massage was over as soon as Horwitz turned down a street.

Nothing surprises massage manager

By ELLEN BUGHER of the News-Sentinel

When you deal with money and people, anything is possible, said the manager of the Ultimate One massage parlor.

David Pettit, who operates the massage business at 3615 N. Clinton St., was asked if sex acts are part of the services his eight to 12 "girls" provide in the five massage rooms.

"That, no," he said, "but if something like that happens sometimes, it wouldn't shock him. "Nothing would surprise me," said Pettit.

But "as far as I know, it's (the sale of sex acts) not happening here," he said. "There's not a girl working for me that I hire for sexual purposes."

Pettit's comments came several weeks before police arrested two women at Ultimate One on Nov. 8 on misdemeanor charges of prostitution.

Pettit and other massage parlor owners or managers acknowledged that many customers expect more than a massage. "You think you are going to get laid in a massage parlor," Pettit said.

"If he did find that a woman was having sex with customers, she would have to leave, Pettit said, because "she would get busted or I would."

The women wouldn't want to risk herpes or other sexually transmitted disease, Pettit said. Also, most of them have husbands or steady boyfriends who wouldn't approve of them having sex with customers.

Ultimate One offers a basic, half-hour massage for \$25, and other, more expensive, massages with such names as international and oriental. The most expensive is \$50. Also available is a body shampoo in which the customer's body is shampooed instead of showered.

Pettit says the difference between the basic and the more expensive massages is the time spent with the customer.

As far as reports of offered "extras" for more money, Pettit said, "It's like when you go in to eat at dinner. If the waitress does a good job, they'll get a tip. If she doesn't, she won't."

Opened Feb. 12, 1981, Ultimate One was once called the Executive Health Club. Pettit said he owned the Executive Health Club until two years ago but only manages Ultimate One. He prefers not to reveal the names of the owners.

Summary of ordinance
Activities prohibited by city ordinance regulating massage parlors include:
Massaging a person of the opposite sex.
Touching "a sexual or genital part of another person."



Pettit: backs ordinance