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An inside peek Only a massage—or more?

The massage parlor business is growing rapidly in the United States. despite questions of legality and morality. Pass a massage parlor and someone is bound to remark, "I wonder what really goes on in there."

The Daily Tar Heel

We decided to find out what does happen when a customer hands over his-\$15-if he should be on guard for a vicesquad bust or if he'll get a nice, relaxing massage. What makes the business so attractive?

We applied for jobs as masseuses using two different approaches-one as overly made-up, under-dressed women of the world; the other, as industrious, but naive college students.

Our first stop took us to an obscure parlor. There were no flashing lights proclaiming. "All Girl Staff." but merely a shabby exterior with the name of the parlor on a sign in front.

Two men greeted us in a spacious waiting room with panelled walls, carpeting, a drink machine and a desk. One man sipped a boubon and Coke.

Two masseuses, one in long halter pajamas and another in hot pants. walked in and out of the waiting room. Neither was heavily made up-a distinct contrast to our painted faces and flashy attire.

The managers handed us applications that were standard except for the questions, "Have you ever been arrested for narcotics? Prostitution?"

In the applications, we said we were high school graduates who moved to Carrboro and were looking for a highpaying job. When the managers came back to interview us together, they were cordial and anxious to hire us.

During the interview, we were told such general information as: "We like

Barbara's experience

The managers took me into a small, fluorescent-lit room with a waterbed and day-glo posters of various love scenes.

"I want to be completely honest with you." one of the men said as he sat down on the waterbed. "What makes you think you want to do this?"

I told him a friend had worked in a massage parlor and had liked the money.

He said wages are good-\$100 weekly starting pay, not including bonuses and tips. And, from the extras, a masseuse could make up to \$80 a night.

massage and relief are legal and anything else is dangerous, "But with a girl in a room by herself, she can do what she wants."

Often, the girls will do more with a customer, the manager said, but the customer must be approved by the management to assure that he is a regular and not a potential vice-souad officer.

The men said they don't know what extras are performed by the girls because they don't ask. "The customers are allowed to touch the girl's breasts and hips, but they can't go into the underclothes. Oral relief and intercourse are illegal, but if a girl wants

'I don't have any morals or scruples. I'm just out to make money.'____massage parlor owner

The man said the parlor gives a Swedish massage, a complete body massage with "manual relief." "Do you know-what that is?" he asked.

That I knew. "Manual relief" is the massage lingo for masturbation-toorgasm.

The man told me that relief is not included as part of the standard massage in all parlors unless the customer asks for it, but, because the relief is legal, he said, this parlor allows it.

Then came the customer's fees. "For \$15, the customer gets the standard massage on a padded table. If he wants his massage on a waterbed, that's \$25."

The customer who wants his masseuse to wear a bikini or negligee pays \$25 for the table massage and \$35 for the waterbed.

For all these extras, the masseuse gets pocket money-\$2 if she massages on the waterbed. \$5 if she massages in a

to perform a favor, we don't know about it.

About the formalities, the men talked about the procedure. "You start by massaging the back, neck, arms and legs, and the man turns over and you massage the chest and finally the penis.

"Each customer gets 30 minutes. Sometimes, you'll get a customer who's had one too many, and it's impossible to bring him to orgasm. Don't worry about it-just be friendly. We don't stand at the door with stopwatches, but if a girl's in there for 45 minutes, we begin to wonder."

The customers are mainly traveling salesmen and businessmen-high-class clientele-one manager said, and few ever get rowdy.

The men asked me if I thought the job would bother me. He tried to reassure me, saying I'd get used to it.

Then one manager left.

He then took me into another small room with a padded table. On the way, he picked up some lotion and oils heated in the sauna.

"Personally, 1 am against prostitution," he explained as I sat down. "If we want to make it together outside, that's fine. But you don't have to do anything you don't want to here.

"When you give a man his massage, you leave the room and let him undress Tell him nicely to take a shower. And when you massage, you can lay across his genitals if you want."

As for tips, "It's like being a waitress. Some get good tips, some don't. It depends on the girl."

The man was willing to start training me on the spot. "Would you like to give me a massage?" he asked. Noticing my hesitant glance, he said, "I'll give you a massage. I'll leave the room, and you take off your clothes."

I kindly declined the offer and told him I would massage his back instead.

The manager removed his shirt and his pants. The underclothes soon followed. Despite my astonishment, 1 poured the lotion in my hand.

"Rub it into your palms and start on the back. You have to massage easy. Remember, you're trying to relax the person."

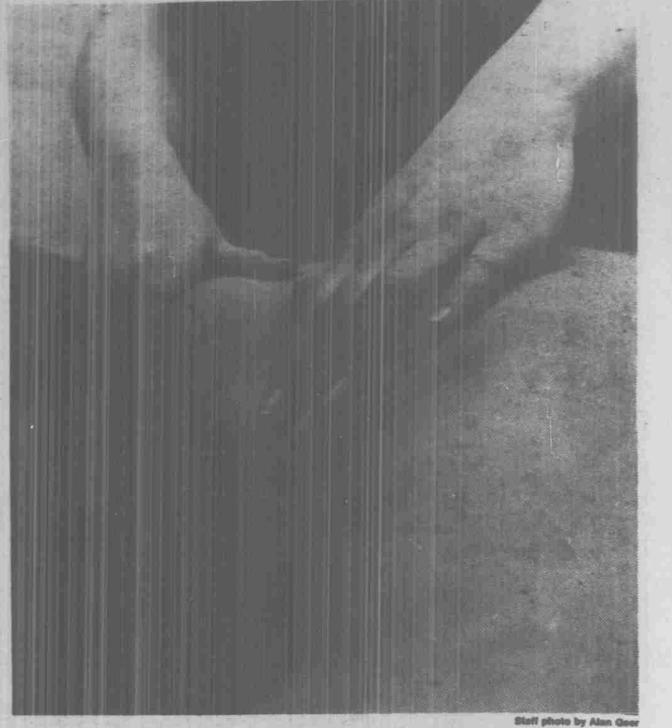
I stopped the massage at mid-back and said he had to go.

Harriet's experience

While Barbara was packed away in some back room, I spent my time chatting quite candidly with one of the masseuses.

Her bottle-blonde hair and skimpy hot pants made me feel right at home in my sleazy sequined apparel.

"You've got to be broad-minded to



Masseuse demonstrates her art

But she added that she enjoys it. That's what matters.

Another masseuse interrupted us as she came in to vacuum. "You've got to be a maid around here too," she remarked. They also continually served bourbon and Coke to the owner.

The owner soon came in and I, too. was skirted off into a back room to complete my part of the questioning. Comparing notes with Barbara

afterwards, I found the spiel I received was similar to the one the managers gave don't really know what one is. Then when they have to give one, they cringe.

"I don't have any morals or scruples," the owner added. "I'm just out to make money."

After delineating the rules, regulations and fringe benefits of the job, he said, "We'd like to have two beautiful girls around here like you and Barbara." He then invited us to spend the weekend with him in New York. Furthermore, if we accepted the job, we could travel to Chattanooga and Birmingham with him the following week-all expenses paid, of course. It sounded tempting, but not tempting enough. Anyway, it was getting late and I was worried about Barbara.

our girls to be friendly and have a good personality," information which meant virtually nothing.

It was only when they separated us for private interviews that we discovered the essentials for the job.

bikini or negligee and \$10 if she massages topless.

Throughout the interview, I was reassured that masseuses didn't have to do anything they didn't want to do. The men explained that only the

The other one gave me a tour of the parlor. Each room was equipped with the fluorescent lights, posters, towels and a bed or table. Saunas, steam cabinets and showers were in one area of the parlor.

work in a place like this," she said. Having left her job as a night club dancer, she had been working at the parlor for three years. In the meantime, she married. "My husband doesn't really like me doing this job." she said.

He told her he had lost his membership

card. This parlor normally requires club

membership, but she said she recognized his

face. She opened the door, led him through

the parlor to the massage room, collected his

money, and then in a completely natural

She left the room and returned with me.

Since he didn't want a sauna, the first step

"This is Sugar," she said. He looked a little

in the massage was a body shampoo. After

removing the towel draped around his waist.

she rubbed shampoo over his entire body

and politely asked him to hop into the

shower. She then proceeded to wash and dry

surprised to see two masseuses.

tone, asked him to please take off his clothes.

her The owner came on tough at first, demanding to know if I knew what manual relief was. When I nodded yes, he replied, "Some girls shake their heads when I ask them that question, but they

Table or waterbed, one girl or two?

We played it straight at the second parlor. We were two young college maidens, nurtured with naivete who just happened to be looking for a few extra bucks. This time there was no excess make-up and no revealing attire.

We drove up a back alley and made our way to what seemed to be a box office window. The outside appearance of this parlor was as uninspiring as the first.

After explaining our purpose, we were invited behind the closed side doors into a neatly arranged reception room. True Confessions lay on the table beneath a statue of a naked man and woman.

The parlor seemed quiet that night. Two woman masseuses, the only other people in the place, talked with us casually and seemed to be making a deliberate effort to put us at ease. Both were wearing negligees. One of the masseuses was only 19, a year above the legal age required to be a masseuse. Her lack of big breasts and make-up was in direct contrast to what we expected.

We basically followed the same procedure here as at the first parlor, filling out standard forms and undergoing personal interviews.

Since Barbara had been the brave one during our first round I decided I too would be a pioneer. And a pioneer I was.

"So, you're a student at UNC," the manager said, sitting at her office desk amid boxes of cookies and half-eaten TV dinners. "We've never really had a student work for us before," she said. "I kind of like the idea." She then ventured to assume that since we were students, we were naturally smart. "Men like for you to be intelligent," she said.

This place differed substantially from the first.

"We're completely on the up-and-up." the masseuse who was interviewing me said. "But we do give a complete body massage." No bikini or topless massages at this parlor-only negligees.

Massages here come in two varieties-on a table or on a waterbed and one-girl or twogirl. A regular one-girl massage is \$15; a regular two-girl is \$25. A regular two-girl, \$25, and a waterbed two-girl, \$35.

Pay starts at \$2 an hour and "you can work up from there," the interviewer said. Tips are usually good.

"We normally just give male massages, but if a girl comes in and wants one. you can give it to her. You don't have to do it though. "Well, have you got any hangups about the job?" the masseuse asked in a seemingly

sincere manner. She assured me I would soon become immune to the whole process.

Stories by Barbara Holtzman and Harriet Sugar

He did.

him off.

Then she decided to try me out on the spot. "Why don't we wait for a customer to come in so I can take you along with me and you can get an idea of what goes on during a massage?" I agreed on the condition that I would merely be an innocent observer.

It was a rainy night and since business is usually slow on rainy nights. I waited awhile for my first customer.

In the meantime she suggested I change my name. "We allow our massueses to do that if they want to ," she said.

"Why don't we call you Sugar?" she said. Sugar encountered her first customer a few minutes later, when a young (he looked about 24), rather nice-looking man walked

The masseuse greeted him with a friendly smile.

As agreed, I was simply and innocently observing. "Do you think you're okay so far?" she asked. She was careful, the whole time, to closely attend to my well-being as well as to his.

The next move was the complete body massage. We walked back to the massage room where there was a large waterbed covered with white sheets. "Okay, hon," she said to the customer, "just take the towel off and lie face down on the bed.'

He did so reluctantly. Relax, she told him as she bent down behind him, spread open his legs and settled on her knees in the V made by his sprawling limbs.

The room was dark except for the light that creeped in through the half-open door, a door left open, so she said, so I would be able to see what goes on.

She motioned me to sit beside her.

"You must always rub up." she said. pouring some lotion on her hand and then rubbing it on his soles. "That is one of the secrets of a good massage." She then proceeded to rub up his leg.

My attempt at uninvolvement was futile. She soon had my hand stroking lightly up and down his other leg, while assuring me 1 wouldn't have to participate for long. Twenty seconds later 1 stopped.

After completing the back side (legs, back,

buttocks), she asked him to turn over and, in the same manner as before, she spread his legs and sat down. During the course of the massage, she kept trying to make him feel relaxed, invariably addressing him as "honey." "Do you live around here, honey?" she said. "What do you do around here, honey? "

But Honey, it seemed, didn't feel like talking. His eyes remained open, peering at me during most of the time as if to say. "What are you doing here?"

After a massage of his legs, arms and chest. I. too, began to wonder that same thing.

In a completely natural manner, the masseuse poured some lotion on her hand. put her hand on his penis and proceeded until she completed the manual relief.

In the midst of all this, he extended his arm and began reaching for her breasts while she squirmed away. I remembered what she had told me-as long as a man touches you on top of your clothing, it is legal. But you don't have to let him.

A few seconds later, the massage was all over. The two of us left the room while he relaxed. We came back to supervise his shower and to allow him to get dressed. Then, as casually as he walked in, he left.

"Well, what do you think?" the masseuse said to me as we walked into the reception room.

I stared at the two nicely dressed men who had come in while we were occupied with the first customer. And I knew one massage was enough.

Barbara returns

While praying for Harriet's virtue as she left the room, I struck up a conversation with the other masseuse.

Her hardened approach to things belied her 19 years, and since she had started as a masseuse at 17, she seemed immune to the business.

Doesn't the relief bother her? "It did at first, but you get used to it." she said without emotion

"It must be just like any business-like working in a shoe store." I brilliantly quipped

"Yeah. If some guy walks in with dirty feet, you have to fit him with shoes, don't you?" She got up to adjust her red negligee.

After a prolonged pause, we began talking about something I didn't know existed-

Part of the problem in taking action against massage parlors is that "the men who wrote the laws were too embarrassed to specify what they meant by 'crime against

nature." " an area policeman said. Area policemen disagreed as to whether or not manual relief is such a crime.

In addition to the vagueness of "crimes against nature," there is also the problem of cracking down on prostitution. Although police are aware that some of these parlors do permit acts of intercourse, it is difficult to prove actual prostitution. "Prostituting prosecutions are almost invariably based on undercover actions." an area policeman said. "The offer must be from the woman herself, and she must make a move to complete the act by taking money and disrobing." In order to uncover this, a vice officer would have to be the subject of the solicitation.

more with the heroin problems.

He added that he has received few complaints concerning the parlors. Relatively little business, he said, is received from local residents. "We've had more complaints from people having their wallets lifted than from the other problems."

Various cities throughout North Carolina, including Winston-Salem, Charlotte and Raleigh have passed city ordinances prohibiting heterosexual massages. In many cases, the massage parlors have simply relocated outside the city limits to dodge the law.

the city parlor is being made.

For parlors outside the city limits, White said investigations are rarely made unless a complaint is issued or there is evidence of a state violation. As in most other cities, priorities of other vice offenses take precedence over massage parlors.

A bill to strictly regulate massage parlors that engage in more than the traditional back-rub has been introduced in this session of the N.C. General Assembly. Rep. Dempsey McDaniel, a Forsyth County Republican, was prompted to take action when a massage parlor opened near a Baptist Church in Horneytown, a Forsyth County community south of Kernersville, the Charlotte Observer said in a Feb. 10 editorial. His bill would require the parlor owners and employes to register their names and addresses with the county sheriff. In addition, the parlors would have to record the names and addresses of all customers and could only be open from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m.

Massage parlors under moral, legal attack

They're called everything from health spas to paradise havens. They generally feature exotic names and all-girl staffs. Some simply give massages. Others, a little more.

But behind their sensuous facade and fancy names, they're all actually massage parlors.

Massage parlors are nothing new to the American scene. The business really began to blossom about a generation ago, boosted by a domestic attempt to match the parlors that World War II GI's found in the Orient.

loday, thousands of similar parlors dot city streets and highways in what has become for some owners a more than \$100,000 annual profit-making business. Despite their rapid growth, massage parlors have been the subject of sporadic attacks due to questions of legality and morality.

Laws covering massage parlors vary from state-to-state. In North Carolina, there is no law prohibiting the operation of massage parlors, per se.

The only state laws that have any bearing on massage parlors are those prohibiting prostitution and crimes against nature.

The investigation of massage parlors is not a top priority of the vice squad, the policeman said. "It is a crime, but we have to be concerned with all criminal violations. We don't ignore it, but it's not a high enforcement priority. We're concerned

In Charlotte, massage parlors have been operating outside the city limits without police interference, but a recent annexation moved one parlor inside the limits. An ordinance passed in 1965 prohibiting heterosexual massages is now being challenged by the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), in accordance with the annexation. Vice squad Lt. H.M. White said the ACLU injunction claims the ordinance violates the first, fourth, fifth, ninth and 14th amendments. Because of the injunction, White said no investigation of

"Most importantly." the Observer stated. "The bill would prohibit any ... well, funny business."

women's massage parlors.

"Women are a lot easier to bring to orgasm," she said, "but they're harder to massage."

"Women come into these places and talk about how their husbands don't love them. Men come in here to escape their problems. I left the women's place after three days." She began to soften up a little while trying to convince me to work at the parlor.

"I think you'll really enjoy it here. The people are friendly, and the money is good." She finished by telling me what I'd been told in the other place. "You have to be pretty broad-minded to work here." I had to agree.