



IAPI NEWSLETTER

IOWA ASSOCIATION OF PRIVATE INVESTIGATORS

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President's Message By Dan Conroy

The 2019 Iowa Association of Private Investigators annual conference is right around corner. This year it will be held in the same location as last year at the Holiday Inn located at 4800 Merle Hay Road in Des Moines, Iowa on September 12th and 13th, 2019. As always, we will have a wide variety of topics and interesting speakers. A lot of hard work has gone into putting this year's conference on and I fully expect everyone will be able to take something away to help his or her business. In closing, I would like to encourage every member to get involved with our organization and see what committees he or she would want to volunteer for this upcoming year. Also, once again, thank you for supporting the Iowa Association of Private Investigators.

Dan Conroy, IAPI President

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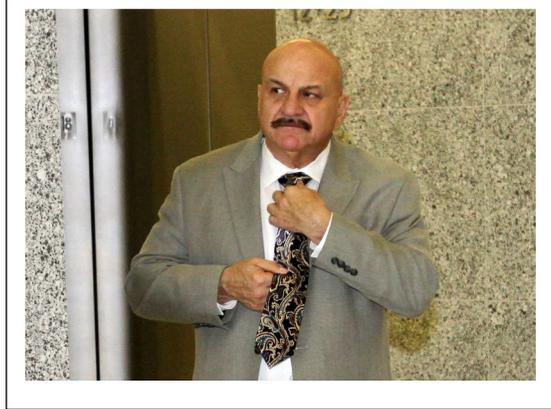
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Relative at center of private eye blackmail case testifies about prostitutes who set him up

By TREVOR BOYER and LEONARD GREENE New York Daily News April 25, 2019



The relative at the center of a blackmail case against a former reality TV private eye told jurors about his trysts with prostitutes -- and the shady man who threatened to expose them.

The witness is a relative of a woman who was molested as a child by Samuel Israel, a Brooklyn man who was sentenced last year to eight years in prison for the sexual assault.

Prosecutors said Israel paid private detective Vinny Parco \$17,000 to set up and record the relative with hookers in a hotel room in an attempt to dissuade the victim from testifying against Israel.

This time it was the relative's turn to testify in a case against Parco, the one-time star of Court TV's "Parco P.I.," who was charged in 2017 with promoting prostitution and unlawful surveillance.

The relative, who is not being named because it would identify the sexual assault victim, said he was approached in Nov. 2016 by a woman in a store he manages who asked him about getting grapeseed oil.

"I told her I can get it in for her," said the relative, who later learned that the woman, Tanya Freudenthaler, worked for Parco. "A few minutes later she approached me with a card."

She had written her name on the card as "Sara Reed," along with her phone number, the name and quantity of the oil she wanted, and the phrase "1 free rub," the relative testified.

After exchanging text messages with “Sara,” he met her at the Wyndham Garden hotel in Sunset Park on Dec. 17. He took a shower, and Sara and a woman named Britney massaged him. When Sara left to take a phone call, he had sex with the other woman, he testified. He said he left her \$100. He said he did not pay for sex. He said the money was a gratuity.

The relative, who is 27, said there was no indication he was being recorded.

“Would you have had sex that night with Britney if you knew you were being recorded?” asked Gwen Barnes, the assistant Brooklyn district attorney.

“No,” he said.

The relative said he texted “Sara” and said the session was “awesome,” He wrote, “Next time it’s me and you.”

Two days later, the relative met with “Sara” at the same hotel, where they were joined again by Britney and a third woman named Heather. Again, “Sara” excused herself to take a call, and the relative said he cavorted with the other women.

He testified that he did not know the episode was being recorded.

About a month later, the relative said he was on his way to work when a man approached the driver’s side window of his car.

“He showed me a picture of myself and Britney and Heather from the second time in the hotel,” the relative testified. He said he and Britney were naked in the photo, and Heather was wearing lingerie. The man also had a copy of that photo on his phone, he said.

Then he addressed the relative by name. “He said that I should be careful who I bother,” he testified.

He said his dashboard camera recorded the conversation, which was submitted into evidence.

The relative, who is married, testified that the hotel trysts weren’t the first time he had cheated on his wife. He estimated that in nine years of marriage, he had been with about 10 different women, some of them sex workers.

More than Meets the Eye: Women Process Servers & Private Detectives

by Stephanie Irvine

In an industry that has been historically dominated by men, each year, more women are paving their own path to success and becoming key figures in the civil process service and private investigations world. Increasingly, women find that becoming a civil process server or private investigator is not only lucrative, but rewarding as well.

To learn more about why women are joining the ranks alongside men in the private investigations and process serving world, we took a closer look at the whys, what happens, risks, and rewards of being a female detective and process server.

Women in the Industry

The exact number of female process servers and private investigators isn't a published demographic, but anyone in the industry can attest that it has been a male-dominated field — and that the tide is changing. A 2012 article from the Bureau of Labor Statistics' Occupational Outlook Quarterly cites that although it's not a statistic they track, "Industry sources suggest that there are about 15,000 to 20,000 process servers in the United States, working both full and part-time."

Process Server Torri Schafer, owner of Torri's Legal Services, explained that "There definitely was an upswing in female process servers and female-owned companies, over the last 30 years, originally there were 4-5, and now there's at least if not more than 100 female-owned companies (that are part of the national association)."

In North Carolina, Ruth Reynolds, owner of Reynolds Professional Services, Inc., echoed that women are continuing to join the ranks alongside men in the industry by becoming process servers, private investigators, and business owners: "I really do think that more women are coming into it and being business owners. They want to own their company and have a voice. I think we will see more women in this industry. I believe there is a special place for us. There are things that we can do a little bit differently."

It's happening all across the country. In Iowa, Private Investigator Amanda Clement, owner of Clement Investigations has also noticed a trend in more women joining the process serving and private investigations industries: "I've noticed that there has been a steady rise of women joining this industry. Some are able to use it as a side job so they can be involved more at home but have more freedom financially."

How Women are Finding their Place

Clearly, this industry has offered more than a paycheck to both private investigators and process servers alike. However, how women got into the industry is a different story. From the women we interviewed, their stories are all different.

Torri Schaffer got into the industry by chance and started her own company after a divorce. "That's how I fell into this business. I had no idea what a process server was 30 years ago."

For private investigator and owner of [Harris Investigations](#), Michele Harris explained that she worked her way up. In December 1985, she started as the secretary for another investigator. Then in December 2005, she started her own company. When asked if throughout her time she has seen more women join the private investigation and process serving industries, she says that with regard to PIs, there are “not as many [women] as I would think in the investigation [business], but yes as [process] servers.”

For California private investigator Christina Duran of [Amatrix Investigations](#), it was personal. “When I was 19, my dad was killed by four Ventura police. Losing him gave me a passion to become someone who helps others [...] I am a certified human trafficking investigator, and I work with several civil organization to help find answers. I love what we do.”

Each person has her own story as to how she got into the business. Some grand, some simple — but at the end of the day, they’re all enjoying their work.

Challenges in the Industry

For Private Investigators, data compiled from the US Census Bureau and published on [DataUSA](#), shows the field is nearly evenly distributed with approximately 53% of the workforce taken by men. While the private investigations industry has been good to her, Christina Duran feels that there are some pitfalls to being a woman in a male-dominated field.

Duran explained, “I’ve been working in the industry since ‘98, [and] women have always been underestimated. I’ve even found paid less, too. It’s definitely not a secret women are not expected to be detectives.” The Census Bureau statistics back up her claims, too, with the average salary for a male in private investigations is \$68,356 while a female doing the same job makes a mere \$54,325.

Clement went on to explain that the pitfalls almost become positives. “As women in any profession we’re almost always underestimated. [...] In my opinion it’s good that they underestimate me because they would never suspect my purse has a hidden camera in it and is catching footage of a cheating spouse, or an individual who claims they are limited in motion for work but are out and about doing the things they aren’t supposed to.”

Although the old cliché that women are from Venus and men are from Mars indicates a huge departure in feelings and attitudes, the challenges, to some, are not a result of gender.

While Reynolds believes there are certain advantages to being a woman, she acknowledges that the challenges are universal. “We are all human beings. We either want to do it right or we don’t.” She explained that all process servers, no matter who they are, face similar challenges: “Laws, stigmas about process servers. People not following the rules are making it harder for those who are. I’d like to see more laws implemented to assist us - getting into gated communities and things like that.”

For Reynolds, there is a solution, however: “Training is the key - and knowledge - and informing legislators and officials of what we do, how we do it, and why we do it. There’s a place for everyone, sheriffs, constables, and process servers.”

Like Reynolds, Crystal Batson of [CMB Private Investigations](#), gender simply isn’t part of the equation when it comes to disadvantages: “I think my line of work is unique and challenging of its own with or without being a woman.”

Advantages to being a Woman in the Industry

Perhaps it is the cultural shift of women truly finding and claiming their place in America's workforce, or it's the realization within the industry that women can be successful that has caused the uptick in female process servers.

When Reynolds was asked if there were certain advantages to being a woman in the industry, the answer came quickly to her: "Oh yes, people will come to the door for us, whereas sometimes they will not come for a male. We're living in some strange times. Times are changing fast. There's a lot of fear in this country right now. I'm 70 years old with platinum hair, and I think I look less threatening than most people. People seem to respond to us better."

Today, there is even a Facebook group dedicated to women in the industry called [Women Detectives and Process Servers](#). No matter how you slice it, women are working in private investigations and process serving — and they're good at it.

Schafer went on to explain that "People don't think of a professional woman being a process server. People have the image of these big guys, and today, my superstar is a 50-year-old Asian woman - because the perception that women don't serve papers, particularly many years ago, has changed. Absolutely, the element of surprise makes them more successful."

Clement affirmed that being a woman does have its perks in the field: "An advantage I'd say women have is that people talk to us. We are someone's sister or mother, and we're physically less domineering. We're able to emit a vulnerability that usually tends to open up those that wouldn't normally talk because they feel at ease with us."

Reynolds commented on how women sometimes approach the job a bit differently, which helps them get the job done: "Most women seem to have a soft hand. They want to do it right. They are sympathetic. They want to get the job done. They want to be there if someone is upset. We advise them that we're not attorneys, but if we can answer questions or point something out on the documents, we will do that. We're not just serving papers. Women have a kindness about them. And I think that helps everyone."

PIs and Process Servers: A Rewarding Career

Most often, we hear that being on the job is unexpectedly rewarding: simply the satisfaction of completing a job is enough to satisfy both new process servers and PIs and veterans alike. The women we spoke with all shared this sentiment.

Schafer, owner of [Torri's Legal Services](#), explained that "I love working with my clients. I'm a very hands-on owner, so I talk to most of my clients, and I really enjoy the rewards of getting the job done." She continued to explain that not only is the business personally rewarding, but that it has also been one she can count on to pay the bills. While telling her story, she emphasized that "This is a good business and it has provided for my family — and it has [provided] my staff."

And Torri Schafer is not alone. Kimberly Hamilton, Private Investigator and Owner of [Female Agents, Inc.](#), wrote of her experiences as a private investigator [last year](#) for our sister publication, PInow: “To me, this profession is much more than that paycheck; it is a way of helping people transition out of uncertainty and finding some answers when life isn’t going as planned.” It’s that ability to help people and get the job done that has kept women in the business — and likely what has helped catapult their success.

Women and Industry Success

As the process serving and private investigations industry changes each year, women are finding themselves not only a part of the industry, but leaders within it. Because of the element of surprise, many process servers and private investigators are able to get the job done in an inconspicuous manner. And perhaps due to their dogged determination to persevere in a male-dominated field, they are excelling.

In North Carolina, [NCAPPS](#) was formed by a conglomeration of men and women but led by Ruth Reynolds and Alice Penny. Today, the NCAPPS board is entirely comprised of women, with Ruth Reynolds at the helm as President. Of the association, she said, “The association (NCAPPS) is coming back from somewhat of a lull, and I’m hoping we’re going to have more input from people, and more training and education. I think that will make people better at their job.”

And it’s not just hopes that are propelling the industry. These women are hard at work. Reynolds explained how she’s worked hard to affect legislation in her state, which previously didn’t allow for process servers to effectuate service: “There was a time when there were very few process servers because of the laws in North Carolina. Alice Penny (process server in Raleigh) and I managed to get some rules changed so that after it came to the sheriff it could come to us. I can see some change coming down the road. There’s a [new] bill coming.”

In November 2018, Torri Schaffer became the President of her region’s civil process serving association, [Mid Atlantic Association of Professional Process](#). Alongside her as Vice President is another woman, Lisa Garton, of Priority Process.

How Schaffer got there is no doubt in part to her determination, grit, and passion for the job. “At this point in my life, I am not taking [anything] from anybody. But I have to say, it took me awhile to get that way.”

There’s no doubt that the future has great things in store for women in both the civil process serving and private investigations fields. While the times are changing, it’s clear they’re changing for the better in the civil process service and private investigations industries.

Video Doorbells: Ringing in Problems for Process Servers

by Stephanie Irvine

In years past, answering the phone without knowing who was on the other end of the line was commonplace. Now, it's nearly unheard of to not have a phone without caller ID. Is this what the future holds for our doorsteps? Only time will tell.

Process servers and individuals alike have historically opened doors without knowing what — or who — is on the other side, save for the ability to look through a peephole or side window. But that has slowly been changing with the advent of video camera doorbells and home surveillance systems.

As home security systems and home video surveillance systems become [more widely available and affordable](#), many homeowners are opting to install their own systems over more traditional systems. Popular companies like Ring, Nest, and Vizant are among the myriad of companies now offering systems at affordable prices.

Previously, home alarm companies would offer surveillance and security systems at premium costs, which limited its customer base. While some homeowners used and still use these services, affordable, self-installed home monitoring systems are certainly on the rise. The new systems not only come with cameras and alarms but the ability to see and even speak with the visitor through wireless technology without answering the door — and without even having to be home.

The question that this new technology presents to the process serving community is how will this affect our business? Keep reading to learn more.

Service Complications

Though the new-fangled technology certainly has its advantages for homeowners, it presents unique challenges for process servers. The first challenge regards the language of the law.

For example, process server Bob Rusch of [Windy City Process](#) in Illinois explained “I rang a Ring brand bell and then a voice came over the little internal speaker that it has on it. [...] I spoke with the defendant who said they were not home and that nobody was home. [...] I explained the documents (summons, complaint) and she asked if I could leave it for her. Now, since nobody was home, there was no actual person to leave the documents with. However, Illinois law says that as long as you inform the person of the nature of the documents, etc. they are served. So, could we consider this service?”

Though it's not explicitly stated, the current laws imply that the service would be a result of a face-to-face interaction. The law certainly does not include provisions for service through wireless transmission, holograms, or whatever other Jetsons-like technologies may come our way. But the question remains — what happens if the voice over the phone instructs the server to leave the documents. Would a court uphold the service? Could motions to quash be filed? At the time of publication, we have not been aware of any instances where this has occurred — but it's almost certain to appear at some point in the future.

Evasion of Service Becomes Easier

Further complicating matters, recipients now have an added warning when a process server arrives. This gives individuals the ability to hide and obscure their whereabouts from process servers to successfully evade service.

It is often the element of surprise that makes process servers successful. While civil process service inherently serves as an extension of an individual's right to [due process](#), many individuals on the receiving end do not want to be served.

Process server and owner of [Torri's Legal Services](#), Torri Schaffer, explained "It has greatly affected how we serve papers. People don't want to answer the door to a stranger, and they see you there." As a result, they evade process servers in the blind hope that perhaps they might not have to appear in court. As process servers, we know that isn't the case, yet it still occurs every day in the field.

Ultimately, affordable surveillance systems will make it easier for those wishing to evade service. To date, process servers haven't been able to circumvent this roadblock, though dodging cameras has always been a tool of the trade.

Benefits of Doorbell Service

It's not all bad news for process servers, however. The wireless technology has made service easier for some servers. For those individuals who aren't willing to accept service and become hostile, they may opt to simply not open the door. Instead of engaging the process server with hostile or violent behavior, the service simply isn't completed. Though that isn't the ideal result, it is better than having an injured server.

Another benefit is that the video doorbells can actually help expedite service. What could have otherwise taken days can be served in a single day. For example, when an individual who is willing to accept service isn't home when a process server arrives, he or she can instruct the server where they are located so that service can be quickly effectuated.

One of Schaffer's servers recently experienced just that: "[...] on the other side of that point is one of my process servers rang the doorbell, someone answered on the electronic doorbell, and said I'm not home, but come to my office. Makes it easier for those willing to accept service, but also easier for those wanting to evade service." Ultimately, the video doorbell has the potential to save a lot of hours and allow process servers to successfully get the job done.

Ringling in the Future

It's important that process servers stay aware of changing technology. Process servers all over the country are still adjusting to e-service, GPS requirements, and other changes that have altered the way civil process service is done. These changes have greatly affected the industry as a whole. Legislation still hasn't caught up with email and electronic filing across the United States.

For now, no laws have been changed and no bills have been submitted to alter the rules regarding how service can be effectuated. Will this be something that will need to be added to the ever-growing list of changes in the industry? Or will it end up being a topic that comes out with a bang but gets put on hold for the foreseeable future, like [service by drones](#)? It remains to be seen, but if things continue to head the way they have been, it's growing more likely. Keep your eyes peeled because it's not just "big brother" who is watching you. You have to watch out for the little guys, too.

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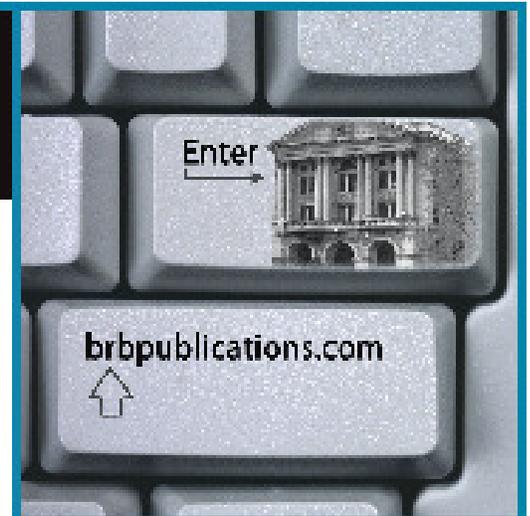
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