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SUNDAY, APRIL 03, 2005

Sandy Hutchens, career criminal that preyed on the vulnerable, claims turned over new leaf, found religion in Lubavitch, victims don't believe it

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<http://www.canoe.ca/NewsStand/TorontoSun/News/2005/04/02/979788-sun.html>

Sat, April 2, 2005

Con man seeks mercy

RELIGIOUS CONVERSION REFORMED HIM, COURT TOLD

By SAM PAZZANO, COURTS BUREAU

A CON MAN and drug peddler who bilked a cancer survivor out of her business begged for a conditional sentence yesterday after saying he had converted to Judaism. Character witnesses, including Rabbi Mendel Kaplan and other congregation members and friends, praised Sandy Hutchens, 45, as a devout orthodox Jewish family man with three kids.

Hutchens pleaded guilty to four counts of fraud and another count of drug trafficking in prescription painkillers last spring in front of Justice Harry LaForme.

Hutchens' lawyer, Joseph DiLuca, said his client has rehabilitated himself and provided \$55,000 in restitution and agreed to pay an additional \$10,000.

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But Hutchens' conversion and glowing character testimonials weren't believed by cancer survivor and widow J.M. Shaw or any of his other victims.

"He is a consummate actor and I believe will use this talent to convince the court that he is a reformed man," said the 59-year-old widow, whose business Hutchens offered to sell in December 2000.

Instead he scammed her out of \$40,000.

Shaw said her husband, who succumbed to cancer in October 2003, spent his final months worrying about his family's financial well-being.

"Two doctors and a nurse told me the only explanation for my illness (cancer) was stress," she said in a heartfelt victim impact statement.

Shaw is now working 52 hours a week, having lost her "nest egg" -- the business she and her husband built. Meanwhile, Hutchens and his family enjoyed a Caribbean cruise this winter and his children attend private school.

Crown attorneys Ann-Marie Calsavara and Moiz Rahman are seeking 5 1/2 years for Hutchens, who has a criminal record spanning 20 years.

Hutchens, who also operated a paralegal firm called Tenants Right Co. and The Legal Network, also admitted that he defrauded three clients with landlord-tenant problems for more than \$25,000.

The judge will sentence Hutchens on April 8.

At 6:15 PM,  [jewishwhistleblower](#) said...

1) Sandy started off playing the hero:

Speculators accused of 'busting' west end
By Laurie Monsebraaten Toronto Star
March 21, 1988

City Shelter is filling the rooming houses with welfare recipients, single mothers, pregnant teens and victims of family violence. But the group is operating the rooming houses without proper licences.

"They are buying up the relatively inexpensive homes in the west end, renovating without building permits, and getting welfare and other social agencies to refer people to them as if they were legal," she said in an interview.

'Violently opposed'

"From our information, this group is set up to buy as many houses as they can get their hands on, and it's important that we put a stop to it now," she said. "They are community busters with no consideration for neighborhoods."

But City Shelter president Sandy Hutchens said in an interview that his group is doing everything to meet existing regulations and that he is offering clean, affordable housing for people in great need.

"We wanted to get the housing up as quickly as possible," he said. "Maybe we didn't do it in the right way, but we're working to correct that."

"I think it's a shame that we're being so violently opposed."

"Governments are saying that the private sector must do its share to help ease the housing crisis. Well, we're not just talking, we're actually doing something about it."

But Disero said Hutchens and his group "know exactly what they are doing" and "deliberately" broke the rules.

Disero became aware of City Shelter after residents on Gillespie Ave. complained about an illegal rooming house on their street two months ago.

No respect

"We believe this is a very shrewd group with a lot of money behind it," she said. "If the way they have acted on Gillespie Ave. is any indication of the way they do business, no Toronto community will be safe."

The city has always had trouble stopping illegal rooming houses - it took three years to shut down the last one in Disero's ward. But council has resisted bringing in tougher legislation controlling rooming houses because they are generally viewed as a good form of housing and the number of illegal operations has been minimal.

But Disero and other west Toronto councillors are worried that if private groups start turning rooming houses into big business with no respect for the law, the city could be overrun.

"Right now, the city is virtually powerless to stop them," said Councillor Richard Gilbert, Disero's wardmate and a member of the NDP caucus, which traditionally has been against stricter controls on rooming houses.

"I want to protect rooming houses in this city, but if we allow this flagrant disrespect for our city bylaws to continue we will soon see an erosion of neighborhood support for them," he said.

'Growing phenomenon'

Along with the freeze, Disero wants the city's planning department to investigate the "growing phenomenon" of private interest in rooming houses, and report to council in two months on ways the city can stop abuses.

The city may want to limit the number of roomers in a non-owner-occupied rooming house to five or six, she speculated.

The Gillespie Ave. rooming house owned by City Shelter has 12 roomers, and provides the group an income of about \$3,700 a month from rents.

If the freeze is approved, it will apply to all groups seeking rooming house licences off arterial roads in the city's four west-end wards. Those wards take in an area bounded roughly by all areas west of Alberta and Ossington Aves. north of Bloor St., and all areas west of Palmerston Ave. south of Bloor St.

2) Then Sandy's lies started unravelling:

21 rooming house tenants face eviction Residents offered palces to stay, manager says

By Joseph Hall Toronto Star
December 31, 1989
The Toronto Star

"I guess I'll just freeze to death," Curran said yesterday. He is one of 21 residents facing eviction on Tuesday from their Parkdale rooming house.

"How are you supposed to find a new place at this time of year? How am I going to pay for a truck to move when I have to give first and last month's rent?"

Curran, a former bar singer whose ulcers have put him on permanent disability, said he and his neighbors were given notice two days before Christmas that the sheriff's department would be taking over their apartments at 233 Sorauren Ave. in the Dundas St.-Lansdowne Ave. area.

The tenants, many of whom are on welfare, were told that the building's new owner had defaulted on mortgage payments, and that

they had 10 days to get out.

"It was a real kick-in-the-pants Christmas present," said Curran, 47, adding proudly that he has never in his life missed a rent payment.

"I won't go to a hostel and I won't live in some hole, so what other choice do I have but the street?"

In the next apartment, Wilma Wintoneak, 50, and Minnie Roberts, her mother, said they face a future just as bleak.

Cramped rooms

"It's getting awful close to the street," said Wintoneak, who had to stop several times for breath as she spoke on the stairs leading to her cramped rooms.

"I was offered other accommodations, but they were up on Jane (St.) and my bank's here and my doctor's here and my mother's 74."

Sandy Hutchens, who said he sold the building in September and has since managed it, has offered all the tenants rooms in his other properties around Parkdale.

"I've told them that I will find them other places, but it's up to them whether they take them or not," said Hutchens, who manages about eight other buildings in the area.

"But I can't put a gun to their heads and make them go."

Hutchens said he sold the building to "a woman" who is "out of town this weekend" and that she defaulted to the Laurentian Bank of Canada.

He said he plans to buy the building back from the bank next week and may reoffer the current tenants their rooms.

But Toronto Councillor Chris Korwin-Kuczynski said he plans to investigate the actual ownership of the building.

Denied licences

Korwin-Kuczynski, councillor for Ward 2, said three of Hutchens' Parkdale buildings have been denied rooming house licences in the past few months and that there was a question of ownership in all three cases.

"I will also be asking the city's housing inspectors to immediately

begin inspections of all buildings that have been registered to Mr. Hutchens either now or in the past," Korwin-Kuczynski said.

"I don't have time to try and wade through the ownership question. We have to find out what's going on in his buildings as soon as possible."

He said he wants to ensure the rooming house owner was not moving people back into buildings recently denied operating licences.

3) Turned out, he was more heel than hero:

Tenants win eviction reprieve Matter needs unravelling, judge decides

By Alfred Holden and Bob Mitchell Toronto Star
January 3, 1990
The Toronto Star

But a judge agreed with their lawyer that the matter needs more unravelling, and granted a 10-day stay on the serving writs of possession for mortgage holders, who want to sell the building empty of tenants.

"I'm just ecstatic. It's just the beginning of our fight, but it gives us some time," said Shirley Claxton, one of 21 residents who were shocked to learn Christmas Eve that they'd been paying rent but their landlord wasn't making payments on his mortgage.

The tenants' lawyer, Jean Hyndman, said she hopes to be able to negotiate with the mortgage holders so tenants can stay when the building is sold. She also plans to investigate some other legal avenues, she said.

Gray area

Under Ontario law, tenants' tenure is usually secure when buildings change hands.

But Hyndman said there is a gray area when foreclosure is involved, which has often seen tenants evicted when landlords go into default. Technically, the new landlord may not be obliged to keep existing tenants, she said.

"There should be a law that when you're paying rent to somebody, you're not out on the street if he's not paying his mortgage," Claxton said. "We've got to get a law to prevent people from doing this. One man's done it, and what's to stop others?"

Sandy Hutchens, who is listed as the owner of the property registered as 844645 Ontario Limited on the eviction notice, hasn't made any mortgage payments since June. When contacted by The Star earlier, Hutchens said he didn't own the building any longer.

The property's mortgage is held by three investors who used private pension monies to fund the mortgage.

Innocent but foolish

Henry Erlich, lawyer for the pension fund investors, said Hutchens owes about \$16,000, maybe \$20,000, with fees.

"The poor tenants are obviously innocent except for the fact that they've been very foolish. We gave them notice back in September that the owner wasn't making his payments and that they were going to be evicted," Erlich said.

4) Sandy realized poor immigrants were an easy target:

Couple, firm charged in immigration fraud Filipinos, Romanians say jobs promised
by LILA SARICK
February 22, 1996
The Globe and Mail

A husband and wife who operated immigration consulting businesses in three countries have been charged with leading clients to believe they would receive jobs and visas in Canada.

Sandy Hutchens, 36, and his wife, Tanya, 29, of Aurora, Ont., were charged yesterday with fraud, conspiracy to commit fraud, conspiracy to aid and abet persons to enter Canada, and employment of an illegal alien. Their company, Gold Star Legal Services, had offices in Toronto, the Philippines and Romania, RCMP Constable John Simpson said.

In the Philippines, 107 individuals say they paid \$1,500 each and were told that job offers and Canadian work visas would be arranged, police said.

A number of those who applied were registered nurses, who paid the equivalent of half a year's salary and quit their jobs believing they would soon be travelling to jobs in Canada, Constable Simpson said. Some wrote letters to the companies and persons they believed would be their new employers, introducing themselves and thanking them for the job offer.

Other individuals say they were told they would receive visas to

study at a non-existent Christian academy in Gravenhurst, Ont., or to work as sewing machine operators or nannies, police said. About 25 Romanians reported paying a total of \$50,000 for promises of jobs and visas.

However, the job offers were fictitious and the Canadian embassies were not prepared to issue the visas. None of the individuals were successful in entering Canada, Constable Simpson said.

Police estimate the alleged fraud at \$240,000.

All three Gold Star offices have been closed and the manager of the Philippines office is facing local criminal charges, Constable Simpson said. He added that the Romanian office manager is in Canada, having travelled here to urge the Hutchens to resolve the problems.

The investigation began a year ago when Filipinos living in Canada and trying to become permanent residents made complaints to the Philippine consulate in Toronto.

The company began as a service to resolve landlord-tenant disputes and branched into immigration work a few years ago, Constable Simpson said.

5) Sandy plays the hero again:

Sick man battles to keep home --- COVER STORY --- One tenant's fight --- With changes in provincial law, landlords are increasingly evicting low-income tenants and raising rents on their former rent-controlled units. Toronto could lose from 25,000 to 50,000 low-rent apartments annually over the next five years, according to the Golden report on homelessness. It warns an alarming number of the city's poor could become homeless. Jack Lakey looks at one man's fight for affordable housing.

Jack Lakey
ANDREW STAWICKI/TORONTO STAR; CITY HALL BUREAU
February 7, 1999
The Toronto Star

'I've been sick off and on for a long time, but this has been the hardest time of my life. When you might get kicked out of your place and you have nowhere to go, it really stresses you out.'

John Duke

'We're seeing more and more of this. I would say about 30 per cent (of tribunal eviction cases) are trumped up. They have the economic

incentive to throw people out, and they're taking advantage of the legislation.'

Howard Tessler

Federation of Metro Tenants Association

John Duke knows what it's like to have somebody try to kick him out of his apartment for no good reason.

For 27 years, Duke has lived at Bell Court Manor, several rundown, three-storey buildings on Berry Rd. in Etobicoke where rents are low enough to be affordable for people on social assistance.

He says he's been fighting cancer for 12 years, contracted hepatitis C from transfusions during surgery and pays his bills out of the \$620 monthly he gets in welfare and disability payments.

Duke always paid his \$440 rent - in cash - to Harry Lipton, who owned the buildings and was liked by his tenants. He became so friendly with Lipton over the years that he long ago stopped asking for rent receipts.

Last September, Lipton died. A new property manager, Owen Sands, took over a few weeks later. It was the beginning of Duke's eviction ordeal.

Since then, he has been accused of not paying more than \$10,000 in back rent and taken by Sands to the Ontario Rental Housing Tribunal, to get an eviction order against him.

To add to his misery, Sands wouldn't fix the toilet in his apartment, which began backing up through the bathtub drain after Duke received notice that the new landlord wanted him evicted.

For months, the 46-year-old Duke has been hiking back and forth to a Sunoco station several blocks away to use the toilet.

To make matters worse, his bathroom sink drain pipe leaks and the fire escape door to the balcony will open only if it's kicked in.

Sands claims that Duke and other tenants took advantage of Lipton, who was a lawyer, by not paying rent while he was suffering from a terminal illness.

The tribunal found there was no proof that Duke owes any rent.

When contacted by The Star, Sands said Duke's toilet backed up "because it's so clogged up full of syringes and paraphernalia for

smoking dope" that were thrown down the toilet by drug users.

He claimed that maintenance workers "had to put another toilet in there, on an on-and-off basis, monthly," due to syringes, adding that the workers jabbed their hands on the needles, trying to clear them out.

"I've been sick off and on for a long time, but this has been the hardest time of my life," said Duke, displaying a series of angry pink scars from surgery that criss-cross his body like a roadmap.

"When you might get kicked out of your place and you have nowhere to go, it really stresses you out. It's been hard on my nerves."

At least eight other Bell Court Manor tenants who didn't get rent receipts from Lipton have also received eviction notices, alleging non-payment of up to \$10,000 in rent, and have been taken to the tribunal.

Since the Progressive Conservative government ended rent controls, housing advocates say many landlords have been evicting tenants, simply to get them out.

Once the apartment is vacant, the province's new housing legislation allows landlords to charge as much as the new tenant will pay, creating an incentive to push out people paying regulated rents.

It's one of the key concerns identified by Mayor Mel Lastman's task force on homelessness, which spent a year examining the problem.

Over the next five years, Toronto could lose from 25,000 to 50,000 low-rent apartments annually as rents rise, the report says.

It says 106,000 Toronto households have an "affordability problem" with housing; the local waiting list for subsidized housing has swelled to more than 100,000.

About 1.2 million people in Toronto are renters but the vacancy rate is 0.8 per cent, which means that at any time, only eight apartments of every 1,000 are available.

And with Queen's Park and Ottawa no longer building social housing, the report says an alarming number of poor people - including many with low-paying jobs - are in danger of becoming homeless.

Howard Tessler of the Federation of Metro Tenants Association says the old legislation allowed tenants in arrears to work out repayment schedules, to avoid being evicted.

"Under the old law, if people fell behind a month or two, they wouldn't have lost their housing," said Tessler. "Now, there's nothing like that and landlords are going to the tribunal."

Tessler says he knows a woman who got an eviction notice because she kept complaining about noise from a new tenant in an adjoining unit. But since the new tenant was paying a lot more rent than she was, the landlord gave her the eviction on the grounds she is a nuisance.

"We're seeing more and more of this. I would say about 30 per cent (of all eviction cases at the housing tribunal) are trumped up. They have the economic incentive to throw people out, and they're taking advantage of the legislation."

But Duke is one of the lucky ones.

He received a written judgment from the tribunal last week that said Sands had failed to prove he had not paid his rent, and had no grounds to throw him out.

In fact, the woman shown as the director of the holding company that owns the apartments - a former doyenne of Canada's fashion industry - may be sorry the property manager tried to evict Duke.

In its judgment, the tribunal noted the landlord failed to show that Duke had been given written notice of a rent increase, as required by law, since 1981, when the rent was \$210. In the absence of annual written notices, the tribunal ruled the legal rent is still \$210.

The judgment said it was made "without prejudice to the right of Duke to bring such applications as he deems appropriate for the return of any monies illegally charged or held by the landlord."

Sandy Hutchens, a paralegal whose Tenants' Rights Co. represents renters at the tribunal, said Duke can apply for a court order for the difference between the amount he paid since 1981 and the legal rent of \$210. The total amount for which Duke may be eligible could be tens of thousands of dollars, said Hutchens, who represented Duke for free and is arranging to act for other Bell Court Manor tenants facing evictions.

"I'd say about half the eviction cases, maybe more, at the tribunal are bogus," said Hutchens, adding that landlords usually succeed in obtaining judgments in their favour.

At Duke's tribunal hearing last month, the landlord's representative said they were willing to forgive his arrears of more than \$10,000 if

he would simply vacate his apartment, Hutchens said.

Similar offers were made in two other eviction applications from Bell Court Manor that went to the tribunal, Hutchens said.

Sands said he made the offer because there was little chance the tenants could afford to pay the back rent he claims they owe.

Two other tenants vacated the building after they were notified the landlord wanted them evicted, he said. They had been paying between \$400 and \$500 in rent, but their units have since been rented to new tenants for about \$700.

The tribunal was not given anything from the landlord in any of the cases to show that attempts were made to notify tenants in writing that they were in arrears and in danger of being evicted.

Sands said such letters existed, but he refused to provide copies.

Ward Councillor Blake Kinahan (Lakeshore Queensway) said he was appalled when he learned of the circumstances surrounding the attempted eviction of Duke.

"What landlord would let people get behind \$10,000 in rent when they're paying \$400 a month, without trying to collect along the way?"

"Not even Santa Claus is that generous."

Kinahan sent inspectors from the city building and health departments to Duke's apartment and is sending letters to all the tenants asking them to call his office if they have complaints.

Sands has refused requests from The Star for the name of the person who gives him instructions.

Corporate searches show the buildings are owned by J. & S. Holdings Ltd., which lists two directors on its articles of incorporation, Lipton and his sister, Evelyn Goodman. Since Lipton's death, Goodman is the sole director.

The city's tax department has received no notice that the building has been sold or that the tax bill should be sent elsewhere.

The address for J. & S. Holdings is on Yonge St., south of Bloor St., in a tiny office over a shoe store.

Evelyn Goodman and her husband Marvin are the founders of Liptons International Ltd., a national chain of women's clothing stores.

The company was formed in the 1950s and swelled to 68 stores across Canada by the 1980s that operated under several banners, before declaring bankruptcy in 1993.

When contacted by phone at their Forest Hill home, Marvin Goodman said his wife "may be an officer, but she's only a minority shareholder" in J. & S. Holdings, and has no involvement in the apartments.

Goodman said he thought the buildings are controlled by the executor of Harry Lipton's estate, but when asked for the name of the executor, he said he didn't "have a clue" who it is.

When asked if Evelyn Goodman knows who is executor of her brother's estate, he said, "I doubt it," adding she couldn't come to the phone.

But when told that Bell Court Manor tenants said they paid their rent in cash to Lipton, but didn't get receipts, Goodman said his brother-in-law would not conduct his business so casually. "He was a lawyer by trade and there's no way that he would do anything of that nature."

HARD TO COPE: John Duke, in his apartment in a rundown Etobicoke building, says he has been fighting cancer for 12 years and contracted hepatitis C from transfusions. NOWHERE TO GO: Cancer victim John Duke says his new landlord is trying to evict him.

6) Still playing the hero:

Tenants of rundown highrises step up pressure on landlord --- Filth, vermin remain long after work promised

Bruce DeMara
STEVE RUSSELL/TORONTO STAR; CITY HALL BUREAU
April 25, 2000
The Toronto Star

Two months after agreeing to pay higher rents in four Thorncliffe Park highrises, tenants say virtually nothing has changed and promised improvements have not been made.

Tenants actually held a celebration in mid-February after Amir Kassam, who owns three of the buildings and manages the fourth, signed an agreement to do substantial work by a May 1 deadline.

Abbas Kolia, president of the Thorncliffe Park Tenant Association, said the only major work has been the erection of a perimeter fence.

"We're not interested in that kind of work. We need better living conditions," Kolia said, adding many tenants are "ashamed" to have visitors.

Tenants in the buildings, which total more than 1,200 units, went without heat at times throughout the winter, and water in the buildings is frequently shut off, he said.

Sandy Hutchens, a paralegal hired by tenants to negotiate the agreement, said May 1 was a tentative deadline for most of the repairs to be done.

"He (Kassam) is only starting maybe this week. We're not pleased, I can tell you," Hutchens said.

Hutchens said tenants may be forced to return to the rental housing tribunal to seek a full hearing on Kassam's refusal to make repairs, despite rent increases two or three percentage points above the provincial average.

Kassam, head of Farin Property Management, said he would discuss the agreement only in person but said he was unavailable for an interview yesterday.

"I want to know who I'm dealing with, what is it about, how is it going to be reported and how is it going to be conveyed in the media," Kassam said.

He described as "misinformed" a suggestion that he promised major spending to upgrade the buildings.

"Every single building in Toronto is in need of work. We've already spent about \$5 million over the last two years on the buildings."

Kassam also dismissed concerns that some tenants were left without heat at times.

"It happens in every building when there is a severe snowstorm. So what? I don't think it was more than a few hours."

Councillor Jane Pitfield (East York) said she met with Kassam personally and he agreed to spend \$250,000 in each building.

Pitfield said she has been appalled by conditions she has seen in the buildings.

"You'll see the same things in all the buildings: dirty hallways . . . dirty elevators, holes in walls."

Pitfield said units have broken tiles, missing light fixtures and exhaust fans, broken cupboards, aging and defective appliances, screens missing from windows and a litany of other problems. Cockroach and mice infestations are common.

'I feel like I've been kicked in the head' Councillor Michael Prue (East York) said he had hoped tenants would see big changes.

"I'll tell you, I feel like I've been kicked in the head," Prue said. "I thought he (Kassam) was going to do some wonderful things . . . and he has done nothing."

Prue said Kassam is preying largely on immigrants.

Councillor Michael Walker (North Toronto) agreed.

"The tenants and this city should take this landlord right through the system and treat him as the enemy," he said, "because he is the enemy."

After inspecting one unit, the councillors left with a woman's words in their ears: "Please help us."

NO PRIVACY: A missing doorknob allows a look into a Thorncliffe Park apartment, where a tenant shows Toronto councillors Jane Pitfield, Michael Prue and Michael Walker a window without a screen. **UNDER THE RUG:** Thorncliffe Park tenant leader Abbas Kolia shows Councillor Jane Pitfield mouldy, rotting floorboards under disintegrating carpet in one unit.

7) Oops, someone realized Sandy was not helping those he "represented":

Ruling evicts paralegals on landlord-tenant cases

Tracey Tyler
LEGAL AFFAIRS REPORTER
November 24, 2000
The Toronto Star

The ability of paralegals to appear in Ontario courts was dealt a severe blow yesterday when a Toronto judge put out the legal equivalent of a "not welcome" sign.

Madam Justice Susan Lang ruled that paralegals have no right to appear in the Superior Court of Justice on appeals from landlord and tenant tribunals.

Lang said if she's wrong and there are special circumstances in which paralegals should be allowed, they should have to comply with a list of minimum standards before a judge decides whether they can appear.

The requirements should include proof of "good character," details about what insurance or compensation fund is available for clients in the event of negligence or fraud, and some sign of whether the paralegal is being supervised, she said.

Lang's ruling follows a series of recent decisions in which Superior Court judges have stepped in to fill the legislative void left by the province's inaction in regulating the paralegal industry.

"I think the way the court is going to interpret this is to seriously limit the ability of agents to appear in the Superior Court," said David Strashin, a lawyer who appeared in the case for the landlord, Equiprop Management Ltd., which was battling over unpaid rent.

Strashin said it was the judge herself who invited both sides to address the question of whether paralegal Sandy Hutchens should be allowed to appear for the tenants, and the ruling highlights some of her concerns.

In Ontario, anyone can call themselves a paralegal. Those who do have no educational or performance requirements to comply with and there is no regulatory body to investigate or discipline paralegals who make mistakes.

The provincial government appointed retired Supreme Court of Canada judge Peter Cory to study the situation. He released a report earlier this year recommending that independent paralegals - those working without lawyer supervision - be licensed and have at least two years' experience or training.

Cory also recommended they be governed by an independent body that has a discipline process, a code of conduct and an insurance and compensation scheme.

For their authority to appear in court, paralegals have traditionally relied on a section of the Law Society Act that prohibits non-lawyers from acting as lawyers unless "otherwise authorized by law."

That exception has given them a certain amount of freedom to appear in criminal courts on less serious offences, as well as in landlord and tenant, traffic and provincial offences court.

Hutchens could not be reached for comment.

8) Sandy realizes vulnerable people get hooked on drugs:

OPP Charge Toronto area Physician and Paralegal with Trafficking in Prescription Narcotics

October 4, 2001
Canada NewsWire

TORONTO, Oct. 4 /CNW/ - Officers from the Ontario Provincial Police, Drug Enforcement Section in cooperation with the OPP Anti-Rackets Health Fraud Investigation Team have charged a 54 year old Toronto physician and a 42 year old Thornhill paralegal.

Arrested and charged on October 3, 2001 were Sandy HUTCHENS, age 42 of Pico Crescent, Thornhill, Ontario and Doctor Ravi DEVGAN, age 54 of Redpath Avenue, Toronto, Ontario. HUTCHENS has a business office on Sheppard Ave. W. Toronto and DEVGAN operates his medical practice from his home on Redpath Ave.

HUTCHENS and DEVGAN are jointly charged with two counts of Conspiracy to traffic in a controlled substance, one count of trafficking in a controlled substance and one count of possessing a controlled substance for the purpose of trafficking. HUTCHENS was held in custody pending a bail hearing and DEVGAN is scheduled to appear in the Ontario Court of Justice, Old City Hall on November 02, 2001.

The charges are the culmination of an investigation that commenced approximately one month ago into allegations that controlled substances were being illegally prescribed. There were search warrants executed in several locations in Toronto and Thornhill and amongst the items seized were 3,300 tablets of a controlled substance with an estimated street value of \$33,000.

The investigation is ongoing.

The Anti-Rackets Health Fraud Investigation Team is a team of OPP investigators dedicated to investigate on behalf of the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care allegations of fraud relating to the Ontario Health System.

/For further information: OPP Detective Staff Sergeant Keith Messham, Health Fraud Investigation Team, (705) 329-6411, 1-888-216-9817 (pager)/ 14:33 ET

9) Sandy's friends are creeps too:

Doctor faces drug charges --- Opium-based drugs seized in searches

Siri Agrell
STAFF REPORTER
October 6, 2001
The Toronto Star

A Toronto doctor who runs unorthodox cancer treatment clinics has been charged with trafficking in prescription narcotics.

Dr. Ravi Devgan, 54, was arrested Wednesday by OPP drug enforcement officers at the practice he runs from his home on Redpath Ave.

A Thornhill paralegal, 42-year-old Sandy Hutchens, was also arrested. The men were jointly charged with four counts related to trafficking narcotics.

The arrests came after a month-long OPP investigation involving the search of several locations in Toronto and Thornhill. Among the items seized were 3,300 tablets of opium-based painkillers with an estimated street value of \$33,000.

Devgan, a general practitioner with a medical degree from the University of Toronto, also runs a clinic in Tijuana, Mexico.

The two clinics, jointly named Natural Therapeutics Ltd., offer alternative treatments such as acupuncture, colon detoxification and photodynamic therapy "the principles of light activism for the treatment of cancer," according to the clinic's Web site.

Devgan's practice has been the subject of controversy more than once in the past.

In May, 1996, Devgan was convicted of defrauding a female patient and an accountant of almost \$300,000 and handed a 90-day sentence. He was also ordered to compensate his victims, but had the amount reduced under appeal and filed for bankruptcy.

He duped the patient into mortgaging her home and restaurant, enabling the doctor to obtain a \$425,000 loan, which he used to pay off personal debts. The College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario found him guilty of professional misconduct in his dealings with the patient. His sentence was a reprimand.

Also in 1996, Devgan was in the news when he treated a 10-year-old Texas girl who came to Toronto to avoid surgery for a life-

threatening illness. Rachel Stout received homeopathic treatment at Devgan's Toronto clinic for acute ulcerative colitis, an inflammation of the colon that causes bleeding, diarrhea, and other serious problems.

After being treated at the clinic for one week, she was admitted to Toronto's Hospital for Sick Children and later ordered by a Dallas court to return to Texas.

In 1998, Devgan was among three Toronto doctors who began to treat cancer patients with a highly publicized controversial drug and vitamin mixture that Italian doctor Luigi Di Bella claimed was a "miracle" cure.

Italy's National Health Institute branded it a failure after doing state-run testing.

With files by Rita Daly

10)

MD trafficked drugs by prescription, court told; Doctor on trial for painkiller scam 'Runner' filled orders, crown says

Harold Levy
Toronto Star
May 12, 2004

A Toronto doctor charged with trafficking in painkillers may not fit the "normal" profile of a drug trafficker but is guilty of the crime, a prosecutor told a jury yesterday.

Prosecutor Moiz Rahman was presenting his opening address to the jury at the trial of Dr. Ravi Devgan on charges of trafficking in oxycodone.

"Normally, when you think of drug traffickers you imagine people with expensive suits, briefcases filled with money and bags full of white powder," Rahman told the jury. "This is a doctor and the tools of his trade were a pen, a white lab coat and pre-printed pieces of paper."

Rahman alleges that Devgan, 54, wrote "dozens and dozens" of prescriptions for people who were not his patients, which were then filled and delivered to an associate named Sandy Hutchens, a Thornhill paralegal who represented tenants.

Rahman described an alleged "scheme" in which Devgan, who pleaded not guilty to charges of trafficking in a controlled substance and possession of a controlled substance for the purpose of

trafficking, filled out the prescriptions. A "runner named Christopher Bird used them to obtain the drugs at various drug stores, and Hutchens co-ordinated the operation out of a back room of his office," Rahman said.

Bird testified yesterday that after being recruited in the summer of 2001, he processed up to 10 prescriptions a day from various pharmacies for payment of \$10 per 100-tablet bottle. Bird said he would pick up an envelope containing the prescription forms from Devgan's office and take them to Hutchens, who gave him instructions. He stressed that he never picked up an envelope directly from Devgan and that there was no discussion of prescriptions the one time that he met Devgan.

Bird also testified that from time to time he dropped off envelopes containing money at Devgan's office, although he had only seen actual cash being put into the envelope once.

Under cross-examination Bird acknowledged he didn't mention delivering envelopes with money in a statement to police.

At 6:27 PM,  [jewishwhistleblower](#) said...

11) Sandy cons again:

The Toronto Sun

May 8, 2004 Saturday Final Edition

SCAMMED FOR \$40GS;

PARALEGAL INVENTS FICTITIOUS RUSSIAN TO BILK BUSINESSWOMAN

BYLINE: BY SAM PAZZANO, COURTS BUREAU

A POT-BELLIED paralegal admitted yesterday he invented a fictitious wealthy Russian immigrant in order to bilk a Toronto woman out of \$40,000 from the sale of her business.

Sandy Hutchens pleaded guilty in front of Justice Harry LaForme to four counts of fraud and another count of drug trafficking in prescription painkillers.

Hutchens duped business owner Jacqueline Todd into believing he could broker a deal with a rich Russian immigrant named Sergie Schneider, said Crown attorney Ann-Marie Calsavara in reading an agreed statement of fact.

'THERE WAS NO DEAL'

"Schneider did not exist and there was no deal," said Calsavara.

Todd was selling Capital City Rent-All in December 2000. She initially

wanted a price of \$480,000, but Hutchens convinced her to up the asking price to \$580,000 so that Schneider "could meet the \$500,000 threshold for immigrant investment in Canada," said Calsavara.

They settled on a price of \$520,000, with Hutchens getting \$50,000 as a broker fee, court heard.

By the end of March 2001, the victim contacted her bank to stop payment on the last cheque for \$10,000 because she still hadn't heard from Hutchens about the deal closing, court heard.

SENTENCING POSTPONED

Hutchens, who operated a paralegal firm called "Tenants Right Co." and "The Legal Network," also admitted he defrauded three clients with landlord-tenant problems of more than \$25,000.

He also pleaded guilty to trafficking in painkillers in 2001 in a scheme involving a Toronto doctor and another man. Federal prosecutor Moiz Rahman said Hutchens was addicted to painkillers at the time and kept the drugs at his North York office.

Sentencing for Hutchens, 44, who attended with his visibly pregnant wife was postponed until Aug. 9.

12)

The Toronto Sun

August 8, 2004 Sunday Final Edition

BILKING SENIORS HAS A PRICE TAG

BY MARK BONOKOSKI

TOMORROW, IT will finally be known what penalty a wolf in sheep's clothing will pay for bilking money from the often elderly unwary whose trust he had conned.

For that is when a shady paralegal named Sandy Hutchens will be sentenced by Superior Court Justice Harry LaForme, after pleading guilty in May to four counts of fraud and one count of trafficking in the prescription painkillers to which he had also become addicted, and almost two years from the day he was charged.

Justice travels at its own pace, arriving in the morning.

Sandy Hutchens, now 44, was first introduced here in October, 2002, although his name was not published in order to avoid any issue regarding contempt of court.

But the facts were laid out, and the facts held true.

Police had Hutchens pegged as a hit-and-run predator who laid his trap by professing to be a fighter for the underdog.

They had him running a bogus storefront paralegal operation in the city's north end, peppering apartments with flyers promising to fight rent hikes and landlord-tenant issues, and boasting of his ability to arrange loans as well as broker the sale of commercial properties.

"He was nothing but a cancer," said Det.-Const. Ed Malachowski, the 32 Division fraud-squad cop who busted him way back when. "And he was a cancer who had to be stopped.

"He couldn't have cared less about his victims.

"Once he had won their trust, they were done."

Back in May, Sandy Hutchens was in the newspapers again, this time when a Toronto doctor named Ravi Devgan was acquitted by a jury of trafficking in the highly potent painkillers which wound up in Hutchens' hands -- up to 10,000 pills a week, the court was told.

Once anonymous, now he was almost ubiquitous.

Back when Det.-Const. Ed Malachowski made his arrest of Hutchens, Toronto Police believed it was significant enough to put on the major occurrence sheet which is issued daily to media outlets across the city. But no newspaper picked up the story, nor did any radio or television station.

Frauds just don't sell. They seem benign, and glamourless.

But, as Malachowski will attest, frauds can also ruin lives, and push victims over the financial brink -- sometimes out of their business, sometimes out of their home.

Which is why he called Hutchens a "cancer."

In the biggest score to which Hutchens pleaded guilty, he invented a fictitious wealthy Russian immigrant named Sergei Schneider to bilk a Toronto woman out of \$40,000 from the sale of her rent-all business. He also admitted to defrauding three clients with landlord-tenant problems of more than \$25,000.

Months before Hutchens was busted, however, it was written here how a now 75-year-old retired bookkeeper named Murray Abshez wrote out a \$50 cheque to a Toronto paralegal to help fight a rent increase in the Bathurst-Finch apartment building that had been his home for 30 years.

Abshez liked what he heard. He liked the paralegal's brochure -- "We fight for you! Don't delay, call us today" -- and he liked the fact he boasted of being in business since 1985.

And then he heard nothing.

He heard nothing because the man who took his money was a fly-by-nighter who had pulled up stakes and moved on to bigger and more lucrative endeavours.

When visited, there was junk mail piled up outside his storefront operation, and the phone was going unanswered.

So Murray Abshez went to the cops, and the cop he talked to was Det.-Const. Ed Malachowski, who started investigating and eventually came to Hutchens.

While it's not known if a charge was ever laid for Abshez's complaint, it was the 75-year-old's tenacity, and others, who launched the police probe.

And now all the pieces fit for tomorrow's sentencing.

13)

The Toronto Sun

August 20, 2004 Friday Final Edition

'NOTHING BUT A CANCER': COP;

JUSTICE MOVES AT BEWILDERING PACE IN CASE OF ACCUSED CONMAN,
WRITES MARK BONOKOSKI

BY MARK BONOKOSKI

BACK ON the 9th of August, Det.-Const. Ed Malachowski believed he would finally know what penalty the paralegal he had meticulously tracked down would pay for bilking money from the often elderly clients whose trust he later confessed he had conned.

For that is when Sandy Hutchens was supposed to be sentenced by Superior Court Justice Harry LaForme, months after pleading guilty in an arranged plea to four counts of fraud and one count of trafficking in the prescription painkillers to which he had also become addicted, and almost two years from the day he was charged.

As I wrote here on the eve of that scheduled sentencing date, justice travels at its own pace, but it would finally be arriving in the coming morning.

But it never showed up.

Instead, says Malachowski, Hutchens' defence counsel excused himself and indicated to the judge that his now ex-client had changed his mind about the plea-bargain arrangement and the agreed-upon penalty, and would be seeking a new lawyer to take up his fight to withdraw his guilty pleas.

If successful, Hutchens goes back to being presumed innocent, and justice goes back to square one.

The case was put over until Sept. 22.

Hutchens, who turned 45 on Tuesday, was first introduced here in October, 2002, where police had him pegged as a fly-by-nighter who professed to be a fighter for the underdog.

They had him running a bogus storefront paralegal operation in the city's north end, papering apartments with flyers promising to fight rent hikes and landlord-tenant disputes, and boasting of his ability to arrange loans as well as broker the sale of commercial properties.

NO CARE FOR HIS VICTIMS

"He was nothing but a cancer," said Det.-Const. Ed Malachowski, the 32 Division fraud squad cop who busted him back then. "And he was a cancer who had to be stopped. He couldn't have cared less about his victims.

"Once he had won their trust, they were done."

Back in May, Sandy Hutchens was in the newspapers again, this time when a Toronto doctor named Ravi Devgan was acquitted by a jury of trafficking in the highly potent painkillers which wound up in Hutchens' hands -- up to 10,000 pills a week, the court was told.

Back when Det.-Const. Ed Malachowski made his arrest of Hutchens, Toronto Police believed it was significant enough to put on the major occurrence sheet, which is issued daily to media outlets across the city.

But no newspaper picked up the story, nor did any radio or television station.

Frauds just don't sell, I wrote. They lack glamour.

But, as Malachowski will attest, frauds can also ruin lives, and push victims over the financial brink -- sometimes out of their business, sometimes out of their home.

On the day after Hutchens was supposed to be sentenced, nothing

appeared in any of the newspapers. He had somehow managed to either get lost in the paper shuffle, or benefit from court reporters being off on vacation.

Readers of this space were bewildered. What happened?

"I showed up in court that day expecting him to be heading to jail," said Det.-Const. Malachowski. "And then Hutchens pulls a rabbit out of the hat, tells the judge he wants to change his pleas, and the floor suddenly dropped out from under us. But his day will come -- eventually."

In the meantime, Sandy Hutchens remains free on bail until the courts decide on whether he can go back on his plea-bargain deal -- with his next appearance before a judge not scheduled until the fall equinox.

14)

The Toronto Sun
December 19, 2004 Sunday
PLEA REVERSAL DELAYED
BY SUN STAFF

TORONTO-AREA paralegal Sandy Hutchens' attempt to rescind his guilty pleas to drug trafficking and unrelated fraud charges -- an on-again, off-again judicial argument scheduled to be heard last week -- has been put off until the New Year.

According to 32 Division fraud investigator, Det.

-Const. Ed Malachowski, tentative dates for an expected two-day hearing have now been booked for Feb. 9-10, with Hutchens having to make a brief remand appearance on Jan. 26. No reason for the delay was given.

It was back in August that Hutchens, 45, was supposed to have been sentenced by Superior Court Justice Harry LaForme. This came months after he pleaded guilty in an arranged plea bargain to four counts of fraud and one count of trafficking in the prescription painkillers to which he was addicted and almost two years to the day he was charged.

Instead Hutchens' defence counsel excused himself from the case and indicated to Judge LaForme that his client had changed his mind about the plea bargain and would be seeking a new lawyer to take up his fight to rescind his guilty pleas and have the case decided in a trial.

At [8:17 PM](#),  Anonymous said...

fyi:

<http://sultanknish.blogspot.com/2005/04/those-amazing-anonymous-journalist.html>

"Saturday, April 02, 2005

Those Amazing Anonymous Journalist Bloggers

Gary Rosenblatt over at the Jewish Week and Paul at Bloghead castigating Jewish Whistleblower for his anonymity have raised the issue of blogger anonymity. The argument has been made repeatedly that his credibility is undercut or entirely destroyed by his anonymity. Frankly I do not see this as a particularly credible argument.

Plenty of compulsive liars, for example Bill and Hillary Clinton, go by their own names. It does not interfere in any way with their chosen career of compulsive lying. People are judged by their track records and that indeed is the only way anyone can be judged, whether they give their name or not.

That my grocer has a name does not matter to me nearly so much as that I know from past experience the quality of his wares. With journalists too, it does not matter what they call themselves so long as there is a consistent name and identity along with a track record.

His critics cite accountability but what does accountability for a freelance blogger who is not doing this for commercial reasons? He has a consistent identity and that identity and his reputation is accountable. No further professional accountability is possible since his reputation is his profession. Personal accountability however is but that is not a credible argument that someone is not a legitimate reporter unless they expose themselves to personal harrassment.

Personally I do not use a name not out of fear but because I enjoy the goofy name and identity. I could just as easily use my name since really no one would care. But not all bloggers are as careless and irresponsible as me. Many have families and children who will be penalized in the schools they can go to and their reputation when it comes to Shidduchim.

Journalists who operate in the Orthodox community and live within it, particularly excluding the Modern Orthodox Community, face an environment where investigative journalism is tarred as mosering or lashon hara and where social reputation for a family is everything and where everyone knows instances of corruption but no one speaks out because leaders and Rabbanim may not be questioned.

Such an environment requires journalists who zealously expose and investigate a community from the inside, unlike the Jewish Week, for its own benefit and with the aim of reform. Its social structure also makes it increasingly likely they will have no option but anonymity. The blog is the future of Orthodox Jewish journalism. It is anonymous and it synthesizes sources and information and throws in gossip and rumor into the mix too. It opens up sources of information that were closed because no one has a face.

It is the zealot with a keyboard as his spear and zealots may get it wrong sometimes but one cannot help but see some of the corruption within orthodox communities and not think that the solution is more zealotry in combatting corruption; rather than less."

At [10:11 PM](#),  Anonymous said...

I have to tell you that almost everyone I've ever met connected with Chabad has been a recovering drug addict, or spent time in prison.

I remember reading a case on The Awareness Center site that a convicted sex offender/murderer who was in prison was converted to Judaism in prison by a chabad rabbi.

Don't we have enough problems within our communities already? Do we have to add another murderer or sex offender?

At [9:01 AM](#),  Anonymous said...

Great. Yet another thug...

At [3:16 PM](#),  Anonymous said...

Jewish Whistleblower, career criminal that preyed on the vulnerable, claims turned over new leaf, found religion in blogosphere, victims don't believe it

At [3:37 PM](#),  Anonymous said...

"Digital De-Hatting:

Over at Beach of Yellow, she suggests a public de-hatting of Rabbonim involved in serious misconduct.

Priest who abuse are defrocked. I imagine a similar thing happening to rabbis who abuse: they are de-hatted.

Imagine... men, women and children gather together to watch the sight. The offending rabbi stands in front of the crowd and publicly recites his wrongdoings. He begs forgiveness from those he has hurt. He begs forgiveness from everyone standing there, for he has

deceived them and taken advantage of their trustworthiness (gneivat da'at). He used their community and their way of life as a cover and facilitator for perpetrating his dastardly deeds.

The crown of the ceremony is this: the offending rabbi's black hat is placed on the ground. He steps on it. The crowd files out of the room, each person stepping on the hat. The de-hatted rabbi takes the ruined hat, flattened like a latke, and hangs it up in a prominent place in his home.

Of course variants of this could be done with De-Shtreimeling and De-Kippa Sruggaing but seriously it would seem as if many in the frum world care far more about their social reputations than they do about right and wrong, about following Torah and Mitzvos or just basic ethical behavior.

We have strong prohibitions in place against Lashon Hara, against humiliating someone in public but in an age when many wrongdoers, particularly the rich and powerfull, have no functional sense of right and wrong, any more than sociopaths do; then maybe it's time for public humiliation.

Certainly there has been no compunction by them in using public humiliation via rumors, gossip, slandering and smearing against their victims. If we were more righteous communities, or perhaps simply borderline righteous communities; there would be no need for such tactics. Gossip and slander against the victim would be rejected, no favor would be shown to the rich and the powerfull or the really special person whose wife you met once at a fundraiser for Ohel and justice would be done.

In the absence of that though, blogs and the internet become a simple and effective way of publically humiliating the abuser, de-hatting him digitally as it were. It is cheap, simple and unstoppable. Information from a website entered into google becomes archived there. The Wayback machine can retrieve material from years ago from defunct websites. Nothing can be lost anymore and every story can be told and pursued and even if legal justice can't be obtained or religious justice; the story can be known and though he may keep his job and his title, his hat will never hang any way but crookedly on his head ever again."

posted by sultan_knish | 12:42 AM

<http://sultanknish.blogspot.com/2005/04/digital-de-hatting.html>

At 9:20 AM,  [AMSHINOVER](#) said...

This just in from the mikva:

Shatzer Matza Is NOT going to be kosher Matzah for the seder ,after the death of the last owner ,new ownership was not clearly defined,therefore whoever made shatzer matzah this year is not clearly the owner, leaving us with matzah gazoolah which halachicly is not useable at thge seder.Until now Shatzer held 60% of the market.

At [3:18 PM](#),  [jewishwhistleblower](#) said...

>new ownership was not clearly
>defined

Apperently, there is a dispute as to ownership of the company.

I'm going to defer making a judgement call and suggest that those affected contact their Rav for an opinion.

At [5:47 PM](#),  [jewishwhistleblower](#) said...

If any of my readers are aware of any psaks or statements by kashrut organizations on this, I would be interested.

At [9:35 PM](#),  [jewishwhistleblower](#) said...

<http://www.canoe.ca/NewsStand/TorontoSun/News/2005/04/09/989368-sun.html>

Sat, April 9, 2005

Druggie repays victims

By SAM PAZZANO, COURTS BUREAU

A DRUG peddler and con artist who scammed a cancer survivor out of her business was slapped with a stay-at-home sentence with tough conditions yesterday. Justice Harry LaForme also ordered Sandy Hutchens, who blamed his crimes on his drug addiction, to perform 50 hours of community service warning groups about "the effects of drugs."

The 45-year-old father of three, who was also ordered to undergo random drug testing, repaid the full \$65,803 he'd ripped off his fraud victims, including widow and cancer survivor J. M. Shaw.

LaForme rejected the prosecution's plea for a 4 1/2-year prison term for Hutchens, whose criminal record spans 20 years and who has five crimes of dishonesty. LaForme said Hutchens doesn't pose a danger to society.

"I'm very sorry. What I did was wrong," said Hutchens. "It was disgusting and terrible."

Hutchens, who converted to Orthodox Judaism in the last year, will

also be monitored by Rabbi Mendel Kaplan, whom the judge called an "impressive (character) witness."

Hutchens, who has three young children by his wife Tanya, pleaded guilty last May to four counts of fraud and another count of drug trafficking in prescription painkillers. But he delayed the sentencing for 11 months, devoted himself to a new religion and has stayed drug-free.

"The court now has four years (including two years of probation) of supervision over my client, with strict curfews and drug tests," said his lawyer Lou Strezos. "If he got two years of prison, he'd be out in six months on parole."

At [3:29 PM](#),  Anonymous said...

SANDY HUTCHENS is a 27-year veteran of the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department who was promoted to Division Chief in April 2003 where she will oversee the Department's Office of Homeland Security, which is responsible for local anti-terrorism efforts. Her office oversees the department's specialized operations such as emergency and disaster response, gang investigations, community policing, and law enforcement partnerships. Hutchens began her career with the Sheriff's Department in 1976 as a patrol secretary. After graduating from the Training Academy as a Deputy Sheriff in 1978, she worked at various assignments until she was promoted to Sergeant in 1986. In 1994, she was promoted to Lieutenant. Hutchens was promoted to Captain in July of 1999 and assumed command of Norwalk Station. In 2001, she was promoted to the rank of Commander and served as a Commander for Field Operations Region III and as Sheriff Baca's Executive Assistant. As Chief of the Office of Homeland Security, Hutchens is involved with all aspects of local homeland security for the County of Los Angeles and serves as a commissioner on the Los Angeles County Emergency Preparedness Commission. Hutchens received a Bachelor's Degree in Public Administration from the University of La Verne in 1998. She is also a 1992 graduate of the Federal Bureau of Investigation's National Academy and has served as an instructor for the Supervisory Ethics course taught at the Department's Training Bureau.

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