

# Murder plot just a 'bizarre' fantasy: Lawyer

◆ 'Hit man' testified he didn't intend to follow through  
◆ Accused's lawyer prods at inconsistent testimony

An alleged plot in which a wealthy businessman and a dominatrix hire a hit man to kill his wife was really just a "drug-fuelled, bizarre role-playing" game, it was suggested at the murder conspiracy trial yesterday.

Alex Petraitis, 68, and dominatrix Sandra Lynn Rinella, 47, have pleaded not guilty to conspiracy to commit murder and counselling murder.

Kerry Anderson, the supposed would-be hit man and Rinella's biker ex-boyfriend, has told the court the two accused involved him in a plan between August 2003 and January 2004 to kill Petraitis' wife.

Anderson told the court yesterday he wasn't sure if the pair was serious or if he was unwittingly playing a role in a sexual fantasy.

"I believe what I said is, 'I don't know for sure if they really wanted her killed ... (or) whether I was a part of their role-playing game,'" Anderson said when confronted with some apparent inconsistencies with his preliminary inquiry testimony.

Anderson — a Crown witness — said several times on the stand that he didn't remember statements he made at the 2005 preliminary inquiry that, in his opinion, Petraitis and Rinella didn't actually want him to go through with the murder.



► Sandra Lynn Rinella

Anderson had secretly recorded some of their meetings, including one at Rinella's apartment in which Petraitis, the former chairman of magazine wholesaler Metro News, was wearing what looked like a diaper or sumo wrestler garb, Anderson testified.

That conversation went on after the recording stopped, and Rinella's lawyer, Joseph Neuberger, suggested that during a part of the conversation that wasn't recorded she told Anderson they didn't want him to carry out the murder.

Anderson disagreed, but Neuberger pressed him on the idea the alleged conspiracy to murder Petraitis' wife of 40 years was really part of a sexual fantasy.

"(It) was a drug-fuelled, bizarre, role-playing scenario, wasn't it?" Neuberger asked.

## \$1M

Crown witness Kerry Anderson told court Monday that he was planning either to use tapes of recorded meetings with the two accused, Alex Petraitis and Sandra Lynn Rinella, to extort Petraitis for \$1 million and a Hummer or to send the tapes to Petraitis' wife.

Throughout his testimony Anderson suggested he may have been confused at the time as to whether Petraitis and Rinella were serious or not, but that is not how he feels now.

Court heard Rinella had a "raging" cocaine addiction and Anderson — her supplier — used the drug, too.

Rinella dabbed at her eyes with Kleenex and appeared to cry as Anderson testified about her use of a crystal ball and her erratic behaviour at the time, which he attributed to the cocaine abuse.

The jury has heard Petraitis wanted his wife killed at the couple's cottage near Buckhorn, Ont., before Christmas. On the surreptitiously recorded tapes, Petraitis can be heard telling Anderson to make it look like a kidnapping.

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