

# The Reason Earl Kuhns Sells Adult Books

By CLIFF JOHNSON  
Sentinel Staff Writer

Earl Kuhns, the 44-year-old co-owner and manager of the controversial Frenchy's K and T Adult Bookstore, 1013 Pacific Ave. does not fit the stereotype of an "adult book" dealer. One city policeman even described him as "square looking."

The store-front is strictly stereotype, however. Signs blare across the dull black walls: "Peep Show 25c", "Stag Party Equipment", "Adults Only". A common sight in San Francisco. But why Santa Cruz?

"I came here because I like the town," Kuhns said, "and because there wasn't an adult book store here. But I would have moved here anyway because the people are nice." He says everyone is nice. Except Police Lt. Charles Scherer. "There's always a bad apple," he murmured.

Kuhns, also known as Stanley Levy, has been selling his wares for years and once was convicted of sending pornography through the mails. "I was ahead of my time," he said. The crime was 12 years ago, about the time Esquire magazine was nailed for the same offense — the result of a rather tame (by today's standards) shot of a jeweled-draped woman.

"Alcohol has a more serious effect on adults than pornography," he said. "If you want to call it pornography."

The smiling merchant regards his books as "funnybooks".

"There always is a market



Earl Kuhns, right, co-owner and manager of an "adult" bookstore on Pacific Avenue, gazes at the floor as his clerk, Richard Castner, left, watches city policemen seize evidence specified by a search warrant Thursday. Two hours earlier, Kuhns had told a caller on the telephone that the store was open "until the police close us". At the time, two undercover policemen were in the store buying evidence to present to Judge Donald O. May to obtain the search warrant.

for comics," he said, "and there is always a market for this. Wherever you go." He contends that his move here was strictly because he wants to live here, that he made no surveys to find if there was a need for his books, film and peep shows, or even if they were wanted.

"It's always wanted," he said. The Pacific Avenue location was a second choice for Kuhns, but he feels it is adequate for his business. "The bus station is just across the street," he explained. "The store in San

Mateo is right in the bus depot. Find me a better location than that."

The book seller said he did not expect the reaction he got from local authorities. He was cited Jan. 2 and arrested and booked last Monday. All of his stock was confiscated by city police in the Monday raid, merchandise with a wholesale price tag of about \$10,000, according to Kuhns. The seizure was done without a search warrant, which some local attorneys have said violates the constitution.

"He (Lt. Scherer) has no right to harass us like that," Kuhns declared. "He doesn't have any respect for the law. He said he was going to make his own laws."

As he talked, the dealer slid magazines into plastic bags.

A man approached the counter. He was about 40 — looked like a businessman. "Prices are kind of steep," he commented.

"So are lawyers' fees," Kuhns smiled. The men in the room laughed.

The prices ARE high, and

with a logic apparently known to the dealer. Most are twice the printed price of the book, but some are half the printed price. The latter are a distinct minority, however. The cost of the various magazines, manuals, "naughty" records, films and sexual devices range from \$1.50 to \$20. The books are all paperback. The devices are plastic.

The lawyers' fees are for the turmoil here and a two-year-old charge in San Mateo which is still bound in legal tangles. "I'll be found innocent," Kuhns commented. "Everybody else has been."

Jack Topler, the unseen co-owner of the Santa Cruz and San Mateo stores has holdings of his own in San Francisco, Las Vegas and Chicago, Kuhns said. He refers to his partner only as "the boss."

He did not know what his attorney planned regarding the legal hassle here, and declined to name him "because it might not be in the best interests of the case."

Kuhns' clerk, Richard Castner, 36, sat near the door where a cardboard sign requiring identification cards was posted. For three hours Thursday he checked ages and admitted customers — the curious and two cops. At 5:30 p.m. the cops came back and let themselves in.

The pair are free on \$625 bail. Kuhns said it takes about two days to restock the store. Prior to Thursday's arrest he said he would continue to restock as often as he is raided.

## A Big Easter Bash Eyed In Capitola

Ronald (Bud) Nicholes its Man of the Year for his work on of the chamber's prize-winning float in the Begonia Festival parade.

Final results of the group's recent election were announced, with Jim Reding being named first vice president and Gary Geyer, second vice president.

Tom Schwerin, new owner of the trouble-plagued Local bar, appeared to report he is attempting to get rid of "the seedy element" that frequents the establishment to upgrade its clientele.

Directors decided to adopt a wait-and-see policy before making any recommendations on the bar.

## Calendar

ys except Friday, Wagner's ttage, 9:30 to 11:30 a.m.; San-

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