

'It was a real worry': Blogger tells court of 'sleazy' session with spiritual healer

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A former client of a northern NSW spiritual healer says she was "sort of relieved" when he stopped using a concerning technique on her stomach so she could turn over and no longer have to face him.

Serge Isaac Benhayon, 54, is suing Esther Mary Rockett for defamation over a lengthy November 2014 blog post, two comments she later made on the post and subsequent tweets.



Serge Benhayon, centre, outside court.

Photo: AAP

He claims she portrayed him as the leader of a socially harmful cult and a sexual predator, saying he had subjected her to "a sleazy ovarian reading" at his clinic near Lismore.

The bankrupt former acupuncturist is fighting the case on the defences of truth and honest opinion.

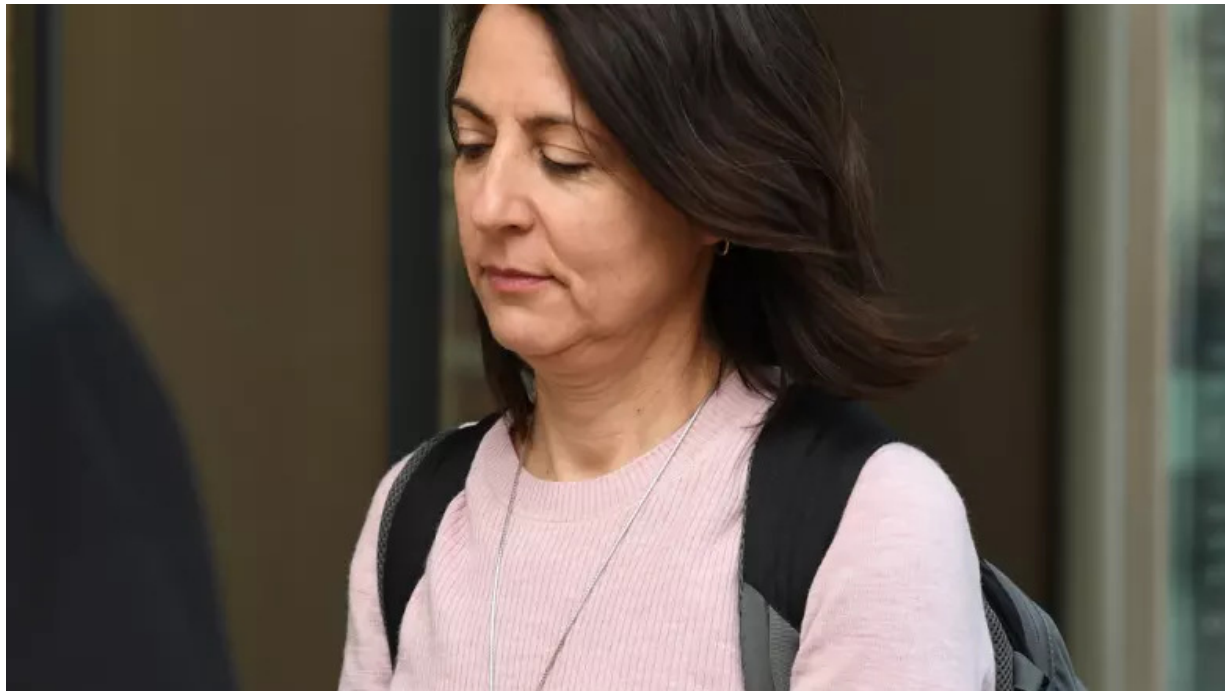
Ms Rockett testified on Thursday that Mr Benhayon "purported" to give her a reading she had "pretty much asserted ... she didn't want" during a healing session in February 2005, which

made her start thinking "about how to get out of there".

"Serge decided to change his technique to try something different," she told the NSW Supreme Court jury.

"I thought it might be better not to cause a scene so I believe I said, 'OK, that would be all right, as long as we don't do anything like that last technique'.

"I left... thinking I really should never go near this guy ever again."



Esther Rockett outside court earlier last week.

Photo: AAP

Ms Rockett said "there were women around" at the Universal Medicine facility, founded by Mr Benhayon - a former tennis coach who is now married to an ex- pupil.

"There was some artwork on the walls that seemed to be female-focused," she said.

"Mr Benhayon's behaviour with me really concerned me, it was a real worry."

When asked by her barrister, Tom Molomby SC, about further contact with the healer, Ms Rockett said she went to a "sacred esoteric healing level one" workshop at Lennox Head in April 2005 as she'd already made a deposit.

"I didn't go to any events after that," she said.

"It wasn't until there was media coverage in August 2012 that I received any detailed information about their (Universal Medicine and Mr Benhayon's) activities."

The article that drew her attention, particularly its reference to 15,000 people having attended his retreats and presentations in the past decade, was titled "The Da Vinci mode" and published in the *Sydney Morning Herald*.

Mr Benhayon previously testified that most people had lived at least 2300 lives, there were spirits in the room during his testimony which he could sense rather than see, and he was the reincarnation of Leonardo da Vinci.

The hearing continues.

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