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TV talk-show host will testify in Ann Arbor

BY MARYANNE GEORGE
Free Press Ann Arbor Bureau

Tabloid TV queen Sally Jessy Raphael, who peers through her trademark red eyeglasses and titillates talk-show audiences with tough questions, will be asked to answer some zingers herself today in Ann Arbor.

Raphael is to testify in a high-profile, \$72-million lawsuit stemming from an episode about the Church of Scientology.

Church staffer Dorothy Dickerson, 61, of Albion claims Raphael invaded her privacy and caused her emotional distress in 1991, after a conversation between Dickerson and her children was secretly recorded by a camera crew and broadcast on Raphael's show. The show regularly airs at 3 p.m. weekdays on WDIV-TV (Channel 4) in Detroit.



Sally Jessy
Raphael

episode, called "How Scientology Ruined My Life."

Dickerson claims the brief segment, taken from a 45-minute conversation, was edited in a way that made her appear foolish.

In the segment, Dickerson confides to her daughter that she made

A 40-second segment of the conversation among Dickerson and daughter, Valda Gratias, son-in-law Douglas Gratias and son Eric Dickerson was shown on a July 14, 1991, episode,

\$5,000 a year at her job and loves to wash dishes for the church.

On the show, Valda Gratias and Emma Urban, another of Dickerson's eight children, told how their relationship with their mother deteriorated as her role in the church increased.

Dickerson, a former schoolteacher and township clerk, was teaching a religious course at the church's Ann Arbor office on Main Street on June 2, 1991, when she received a surprise visit from the family members.

Dickerson says she suggested they go to a park at Ann and Main streets to have a private conversation about personal details of her employment with the church.

What Dickerson didn't know is that Valda Gratias was wearing a microphone and a tape recorder that

broadcast the conversation to a sound truck owned by G.T.N., an Oak Park video company that taped the conversation.

G.T.N., the show's producers, the distributors Multimedia Inc. and the Cult Awareness Network are also named in the lawsuit.

The suit is in its third week of trial before Washtenaw County Circuit Judge Melinda Morris.

Dickerson, who has not named any family members in the suit, says her children were tricked into taping the conversation.

The defendants' attorney, Greg Curtner, charged that the church is "using Dorothy to punish the media for criticizing the church."

But Dickerson's attorney, Leo Januszewski, said he has no ties to the church.