

# Jury set to debate 'Sally' suit

Raphael's show 'needed an image,' plaintiff's attorney says

By CHONG W. PYEN  
NEWS STAFF REPORTER



RAPHAEL

Jury deliberations were to begin this morning in a lawsuit brought by an Ann Arbor Scientologist against television talk show host Sally Jessy Raphael over the airing of a secretly taped family conversation.

After four weeks of testimony by dozens of witnesses, including Raphael and the plaintiff, Dorothy Jean Dickerson, attorneys Tuesday made closing arguments in a case that pits an individual's right

to privacy against the public's right to know.

Washtenaw Circuit Judge Melinda Morris was to give jury instructions this morning before the five men and two women retired into the jury room to begin deliberations.

The suit against Raphael and Multimedia Inc., which produces her daytime talk show, asks for \$72 million in compensatory and punitive damages.

Dickerson, 61, of Albion is a member and employee of the Church of Scientology in Ann Arbor. She claims the 40-second home video footage broadcast in July 1991 on the "Sally" show violated her privacy, defamed her and her church and destroyed her relationship with her eight grown children.

See RAPHAEL, C3

RAPHAEL, from C1

## Jury gets case against Sally Jessy Raphael

Her daughters testified that their mother had been "brainwashed" by the religion, had lost control of her destiny and had been removed from reality and her family.

Dickerson's conversation with her children at a small park in downtown Ann Arbor on June 2, 1991, was secretly videotaped by a hired crew and used on a "Sally" show titled "Scientology Ruined My Life." Raphael described the children's action as a "desperate attempt to get their mother out of Scientology."

Robert E. Logeman, one of Dickerson's attorneys, said the airing violated Michigan's laws prohibiting eavesdropping and protecting privacy and portrayed Dickerson in a false light. As a result, he said, Dickerson's relationship with her children and her trust in them were "forever destroyed."

The show's producers and Dickerson's daughters "had this plan... (a) theatrical performance, creating a very, very negative image of Scientology, dealing in sensational spins," said Logeman. "... They (Raphael and the Dickerson children) both needed each other, they needed an image, they needed a live subject and dragged Mrs. Dickerson on the show although she didn't want any part of that."

The lawyer said Dickerson's children planned to take their mother to a deprogramming center in Iowa against her will, despite her assertion that she was "happy for the first time since high school."

Added Logeman: "We have a freedom of choice. The nice thing about our society is we get to choose. We get to choose our life. That's what makes us the most unique and precious government in the world."

Logeman asked the jury to "send a message" to society that "the right to privacy, the right to be left alone, the right to be free" should be upheld and protected.

Speaking for the defendants, David L. Freeman, a First Amend-

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— Robert E. Logeman,  
attorney for Scientologist  
Dorothy Jean Dickerson

ment expert from Greenville, S.C., called the lawsuit an attempt by Scientology "to silence, chill and punish critics" of the organization founded in the 1950s by L. Ron Hubbard based on Dianetics, a form of psychotherapy.

Freeman said that through Scientology's indoctrination, Dickerson had been forced to "disconnect" herself from her own family and everything against the organization, becoming an "Alice in Wonderland."

Freeman said Scientology is a "legitimate public issue" in view of its controversial effects on its members and their families, and that the "Sally" show provided a justifiable "forum for public disclosure."

Besides, he said, a family conversation in a public park is not protected under privacy laws.

"The children were perfectly justified in everything they did. They did what any loving child would do," said Freeman.

Added the defense lawyer: "Scientology manufactured this lawsuit. We're here today solely because Scientology has elected to punish the defendants, (who are) entitled to full protection under the First Amendment, freedom of expression. ... You'll be sending a sorely needed message to Scientology that they will not be allowed to come into the courtroom and use our justice system to muzzle our freedom of speech, the public's right to know."