

Judy Gerber

Photo by George Dombrowski

Gerber claims rights violated

By SHAWN ROSSITER
Of the Emerald

There seems to be a question whether personal rights or broadcast regulations have been violated at KWAX-FM, the radio station located on the third floor of Villard Hall. Judy Gerber, University sophomore and outspoken feminist, feels she has been unjustly replaced on the program she originated, "The Common Woman."

The half-hour show, now named "Today's Woman," was conceived last year as KWAX's only outlet for political discussion on sexism, feminism, lesbianism, alternative health for women and other topics concerning "the woman-identified woman." After producing and taping several programs with guests such as a gynecologist, representatives from the Eugene Women Against Rape and the Womens' Political Caucus and a witch who discussed herbal healing, Gerber was informed of the staff's disapproval.

John Shepherd, the director of KWAX and the Division of Broadcast Services and Televised Instruction, and other staff members objected to Gerber's non-objectivity during her interviews. She included herself in the questions and referred to her own personal experiences during the interview. Following Federal Communication Commission and State Board of Higher Education regulations, partiality is not allowed for a KWAX program moderator, according to Shepherd.

"I know it's hard as hell to be objective," Shepherd said, "and Judy has strong convictions which I respect her for... but, we couldn't allow her program to be a soapbox."

Shepherd, along with other staff members, thought "The Common Woman" was too narrow in scope. They wanted to see housewives, policewomen and secretaries brought in. The audience appeal had to be widened.

Gerber did not agree. She felt her program reached the audience it was created for.

Gerber signed a new contract with KWAX last June, on a "trial basis." The contract specified the use of a disclaimer message ("views expressed do not represent the licensee or administrative staff of KWAX"), that the moderator remain neutral, comply with the Fairness Doctrine and that programs be taped and filed 24 hours in advance of air time. Gerber felt she complied with the Fairness Doctrine which demands an attempt at seeking opposing viewpoints and giving them equal air time.

After the contract was drawn up, Gerber taped more programs and decided she could not remain objective about the status of women in society. She suggested another half-hour program for the broader view of women and was refused.

When Gerber realized she could not remain neutral during the discussions, she questioned that point of the contract. By playing the disclaimer and complying with the Fairness Doctrine she said she felt she was within her rights of free speech.

Shepherd then solicited advice from State Board representatives and lawyers who maintained Gerber's advocate position on the program was illegal according to two rulings: section 399 of the Federal Communications Act which reads, "no non-commercial, education broadcasting station may engage in editorializing or may support or oppose any candidate for political office" and State Board of Higher Education Article 42.110 which reads, "no employee shall take action which might be construed as committing the institution or the Board to a position on public issues."

A radio station does not have the prerogative that the print media has," Shepherd interpreted. "We have to make sure we are offering and designing a program that has the largest possible outlet for opinion."

After requesting Gerber bring other views into the program, "it became apparent that Judy didn't want other views," Shepherd claimed.

Gerber was replaced with Jerry Wright, a senior in Journalism. When Wright took over the program, Gerber was given a

Publishers clean out sexism

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When the Women on Words and Images (WWI) went through 134 readers from 14 publishers, they found boys outnumbering girls five to two as lead characters in stories. Their study uncovered six biographies of males to every one biography of a female. In mathematics books, WWI found boys solving astronomy and chemistry problems and learning to buy stocks while girls measured curtains and bought flour.

While researchers, psychologists and educators comb textbooks for further evidence of sex-role stereotyping, federal and state governments have taken some steps to eliminate the school book sexism. Two bills which may have some effect have already been passed by Congress and another is pending.

One of these bills, Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, says that no person on the basis of sex shall "be subjected to discrimination under any educational program" receiving federal funds. Whether or not this covers the subject of textbooks has been a matter of debate.

The *New York Times* noted that Title IX failed "to cover discriminatory curriculum materials, such as textbooks that contain sex bias." The Department of Health, Education and Welfare (HEW) added that any attempt to ban the use of such materials "would raise grave constitutional questions under the First Amendment."

But according to Wilma Scott Heide, past president of the National Organization for Women (NOW), "selection of sexist texts by state action (via the public school boards) is denial of individual First

Amendment rights of freedom of speech by excluding, derogating, and/or stereotyping women." Dr. Anne Scott, NOW legislative vice-president has observed that, as is, there is nothing in Title IX "that makes a school system accountable to its required statement of non-discrimination."

Another bill dealing with sexist texts, the Women's Educational Equity Act of 1973, was recently signed by President Ford. The bill authorizes \$30 million annually to "encourage the development of new and improved curriculums" and to implement community-oriented educational programs on women in American history.

Senator Charles Percy has introduced another bill to Congress that would insure even more funding to "help women gain their place as equal beneficiaries of society." Percy's bill, the Women's Equal Educational Opportunity Act, is still in committee.

But while the federal government continues decisionmaking over the matter, eight state governments have already outlawed sexism in education and texts. For instance, in California sexist textbooks must be phased out by 1975.

And publishing houses have begun ferreting out sexist references in their books. J.B. Lippincott, the D.C. Heath Co. and Harper and Row all have said they are carefully examining their manuscripts for offensive sex-role stereotyping.

McGraw-Hill, which has recently published an 11-page *Guidelines for Equal Treatment of the Sexes* stated: "We realize that the language of literature cannot be prescribed, but we want to encourage a greater freedom for all individuals to pursue their interests and realize their potentials."

Tuesday night, midnight to 2 p.m. show and a warning from Shepherd that the staff would monitor the programs to check for regulation agreement. If the rules weren't kept, Shepherd said that show also would be removed from the KWAX II schedule. After two programs at the end of September, Gerber was scheduled out of the October time slot.

KWAX-II coordinator Mark Chan remembered that Gerber missed the meetings where scheduling was arranged.

Now, Gerber has five hours of control board shifts each week. She is one of a dozen persons who are collectively planning and promoting a community radio station, KRAS, which is expected to cost \$15,000 during the first year of operation.

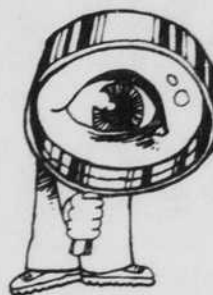
Gerber has sought legal advice and says she is considering pressing charges against KWAX for unfair discrimination and limitation of first amendment rights. She is also looking forward to a community radio station so she "won't need KWAX anymore."

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