

The Family Council

Editor's note: The Family Council consists of a judge, a psychiatrist, three clergymen, three editors and a women's editor. Each article is a summary of a family disagreement presented to the Council. The Council deals with problems, major and minor, encountered by guidance counselors and social workers. Edited by Mrs. Alma Denny (Copyright by General Features Corp.)

Karen L. - He won't let me drive the car when he is in it.

Jerome L. - How can a man let himself be chauffeured by a woman?

Karen L. - Jerry and I both go to business, and our only chance to enjoy our new car is over the week ends. During the week we use it for an occasional errand and for supermarket stocking-up, but our daily travel is by bus and train. On our week end jaunts, however, he won't let me touch the wheel. Since we travel great distances and he grows tired driving, this is not only a waste of an alternate driver - me - but makes the trip pretty uninteresting to me.

What gets my goat is that it was he who got me interested in driving. As a city girl I'd never bothered to learn. My folks got along fine without an automobile. But a year after my marriage, when we bought our home, Jerry insisted that I get a license. Now with our smooth convertible, I'm wild about motoring. But at this rate I'll have to get my own car for a chance to get in some real mileage as a driver.

Jerome L. - When I urged Karen to get her driver's license, it was because it's a good idea to have one. It did not mean I was handing over the job of driving us around. When the two of us go out for a ride, I'm the one who's supposed to be at the wheel. I'm the man in the family - remember? I think any able-bodied man sitting next to a woman driver looks like a kid being taken by-bye by his mommy.

Furthermore, a license to drive doesn't make a good driver out of Karen. The one time I did let her drive me around she almost went off the road. If I hadn't grabbed the wheel and straightened the car out - well, we would not be here today talking over the problem.

I'm glad she learned how to drive. It's a skill everyone should have. Now she can run the car wherever she wants on her own errands, without depending on me. But for pleasure trips I'll take over.

The Council: We'll bet, Jerome, that Karen sitting beside you doesn't look one bit like your mommy, no matter who's in the driver's seat. And we'll bet, too, that she wouldn't mind relinquishing the steering wheel if you could cough up some more flattering and convincing reasons than you

have thus far advanced. Any spunky lady would take umbrage at being told to move over because (1) she's a bad driver, and (2) she's trying to wear the family pants.

A little more tact there, boy. Certainly you trust her driving when you dispatch her on local stops in your prized chariot. Perhaps she became flustered the first time you let her chauffeur you; the honor literally went to her head and she lost control. But basically she's an okay driver, isn't she? Then tell her so. Assure her you trust her skill and that that isn't the vital reason for your insistence upon steering.

Why not present your case in some such form as this? You're delighted that she can drive and you're grateful for having her on board. On long monotonous stretches, it's a comfort to have an alternate driver to spell you out. And, in case you feel ill, it's a nice safe feeling to know Karen can bring the conveyance safely to port. But you'd rather that she consider herself the "auxiliary" motor, called upon in emergencies or for special reasons. It's no reflection on her proficiency. It's just that, as a man, you like to feel you're taking her out rather than the reverse when you're in the car.

To throw a small-sized monkey wrench into your cliché about who's "supposed" to be at the wheel, Jerome, we might remind you that lady taxi drivers cause their passengers no embarrassment, and that lady truck drivers appear in more places than on "What's My Line?" In fact, the newspapers reported recently that a Lincolnton, N.C., truck driver's wife relieves her husband on long hauls between New York and Georgia.

To Karen we'd whisper that she may well have the best of it. She can sit back and enjoy the scenery, doze and read. Jerome, the gallant swain, must keep his eyes glued to what's ahead, behind, right, left, over and under. Had enough, Jerry?

Medford Youth Enters Reed College, Portland

James Edward Tungate, 2441 Edgemont Dr. Medford, has entered Reed college in Portland as one of 254 freshmen from 30 states and eight foreign countries.

Tungate will major in natural science. He is the son of Mr. and Mrs. James R. Tungate.

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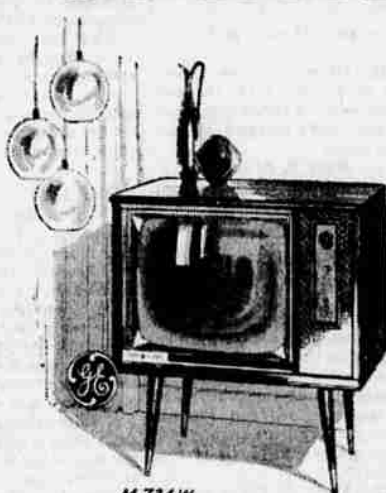
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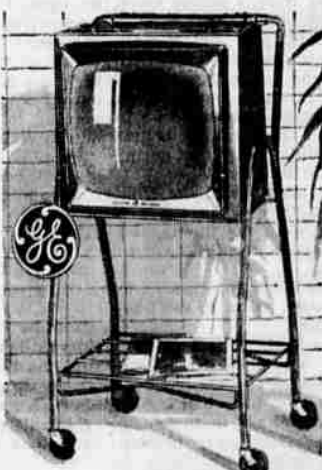
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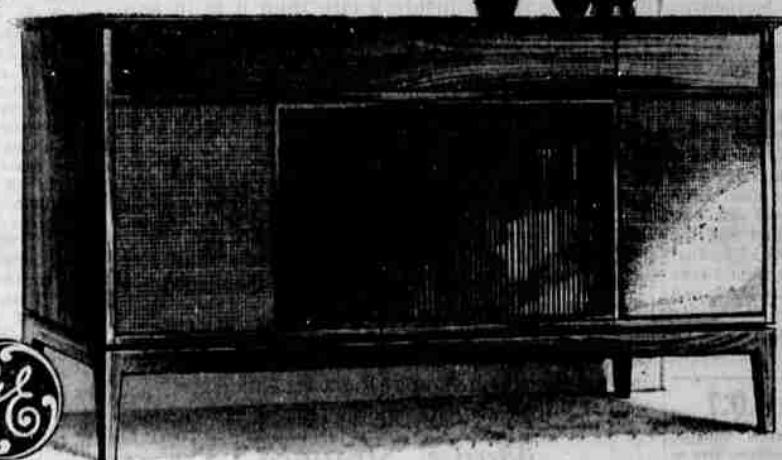
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