

## Was Prof's Lecture Academic Freedom Or Sex Harassment?

A Male Student in California,  
Irked by 'Male-Bashing,'  
Asserts It Was the Latter

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SACRAMENTO — Craig Rogers and scores of other students walked into a Psychology 100 class at California State University here last December expecting a guest lecture on issues like TV violence. Instead, Joanne Marrow, a tenured professor and lesbian activist, launched into a lecture on one of her life's goals: to empower women to masturbate so they can overcome the "hardship" of sex with men.

Mr. Rogers, 33 years old, cringed in the back of class as the professor's lecture unfolded with personal sex tales, how-to tips and close-up slides of women's and adolescent-girls' genitals. Others who sat in the class say Ms. Marrow made flip-pant remarks about male genitalia, while denigrating childbirth as ruinous to female sexuality.



Craig Rogers

In the outcry that has followed, many of Ms. Marrow's peers in the psychology department here have rushed to defend her lecture as one protected under the umbrella of academic freedom.

But Mr. Rogers, a married man with two children who describes himself as a Christian, has another view. He has filed a \$2.5 million sexual-harassment claim against Ms. Marrow and the university, citing the school's 10-year-old sexual-harassment code. The lecture, he says, was crude, unadulterated male-bashing combined with lesbian proselytizing that left him feeling "raped and trapped." Furthermore, he adds that the university, insensitive to his feelings, declined to exempt him from five questions on a final exam that stemmed from Ms. Marrow's lecture.

Ms. Marrow, who has taught at the school since 1974, won't discuss the case. But her lawyer, John Poswall, dismisses Mr. Rogers as a prude and his complaint as "fundamentalist Christian McCarthyism" designed to "put sexuality back in the closet." He fumes: "It's absurd. This isn't Sacramento State Kindergarten."

But Kathleen Smith, Mr. Rogers's lawyer, accuses the state-funded university of having a politically correct double standard; it is "unimaginable," she says, that a male professor delivering the same lecture while demeaning women wouldn't have been punished.

### Allowed to Proceed

Officials at the university, known locally as Sacramento State, decline to comment, saying they have launched an investigation into the matter. Meanwhile, the State Board of Control, an agency charged with screening sexual-harassment and other complaints against the state, has ruled that Mr. Rogers may proceed with a suit against Ms. Marrow and the university.

In Ms. Smith's view, the lecture violated several provisions of the university's sexual-harassment code that prohibits, among other things, speech or behavior that might create a "hostile, offensive or otherwise adverse" learning environment, persistent "sexually explicit or sexist" statements and "display of sexually explicit pictures." Furthermore, in declaring that he wouldn't be exempted from Ms. Marrow's test questions, the university essentially coerced Mr. Rogers into sitting

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through a lecture that he found repugnant, Ms. Smith adds.

The case has clearly jolted liberal faculty members here on a campus where most students consider themselves moderates, and in a town where a newly conservative state legislature — with authority over education funding — has just swept into power. Ms. Marrow's allies fear that it could precipitate a Republican funding backlash, and they rail against what they see as a dire threat to academic freedom.

Martin Rogers, a faculty member and gay-rights activist, calls the case "a terribly dangerous precedent" and advises critics of Ms. Marrow to "grow up." And Robert Marrone, another of Ms. Marrow's colleagues, says that while she may have gotten carried away in her lecture, it hardly amounts to sexual harassment. "Her basic point of view is that we live in a repressed, two-faced society," says Mr. Marrone, who considers Ms. Marrow "courageous."

But some think Craig Rogers's claim is a necessary wake-up call to the campus's identity-politics crowd that has grown aloof to sensitivities other than its own. George Parrott, a psychology professor who questions the propriety of Ms. Marrow's lecture in a general psychology course, says, "In these periods of political correctness we tend to be compassionate to women but there may well be a kind of insensitivity to males. The effect is unfortunate."

### Surprise Subject

It was a sunny noon-hour this past December when Ms. Marrow, who teaches human sexuality, arrived to guest teach the undergraduate psychology class at the invitation of the course's regular professor, William Westbrook. In preparation for her lecture, students had been assigned to read articles on emotions, aging and television violence.

But Ms. Marrow, an imposing, short-haired 50-year-old who wears thick glasses, cowboy hats and turquoise jewelry, launched into a masturbation lecture, warning students to leave if they found related material offensive. According to

Rogers's complaint, filed with the State Board of Control, she told about bringing her sisters autoerotic-sex devices for Christmas. She invited students to ask her after class for copies of a sex-toys catalog. She also recommended students read a how-to orgasm book and joked she could get rich with a diet program centered on masturbation, the complaint states. Disgusted, Mr. Rogers left the room, but, wary of missing test material, returned as Ms. Marrow began showing slides with close-ups of women's genitals, according to his complaint.

At one point, she showed slides of a mother's genitals, followed by slides of the woman's two young daughters, to illustrate that sexual parts are hereditary, the complaint goes on. She even stroked some of the images, noting "how cute" they were, Mr. Rogers and a number of students say. She also recounted a story of how she and her sisters went skinny dipping and compared each others private parts; she suggested that women students do the same with their mothers, Mr. Rogers and these students add.

### Queasy Students

Mr. Rogers wasn't the only student to feel uneasy about the lecture. A red-faced Gabriel Romo recalls doodling to avoid looking up; Mr. Romo, 24, says he is no stranger to locker-room talk but found the lecture "too raunchy even for me."

Jean Finley, a 45-year-old mother in the class, says she steamed as Ms. Marrow pointed at photos of a woman's genitals

before and after pregnancy to show how giving birth "mutilates" women's bodies. "My birth experience wasn't like that," says Ms. Finley. "It's like she wants to take the pleasure away from male and female partners. She has an almost hatred for men."

Class ended and Mr. Rogers stumbled out, bumping into a friend, Dean Hummer, 23, who recalls his buddy "was just blown away." Later at home in a quiet suburb outside Sacramento, Mr. Rogers's wife, Wendy, didn't want to hear details: "It was gross," she says. So Mr. Rogers talked to the Rev. Les Shelton, his pastor at the First Church of the Nazarene; Mr. Shelton referred him to Ms. Smith, who also is a minister with United Church of Christ, another evangelical Christian church.

The antagonists in this issue couldn't be more different. Though she declined to

be interviewed, Ms. Marrow, according to her writings, was kicked out of the Maryknoll convent in Valley Park, Mo., in 1966 as a 21-year-old. She went on to get her doctorate in psychology, working in child development, then sexuality. In a book, "Lesbian Nuns: Breaking Silence," she detailed her "spiritual transformation" from nun to lesbian by including a 1966 photo of herself in a habit and a 1960 shot of herself toppers on a bluff.

A crusader for women's studies and women's-abuse shelters, she is well known in Sacramento-area lesbian circles, adver-

tising her hypnotherapist and psychologist practice in "Mom Guess What Newspaper," a gay publication. She burns incense in her office on the fifth floor of the psychology building. A statue of a Hindu deity sits on her desk. Her office door bears a psychedelic bumper sticker: "Follow Your Bliss!"

In his home, Mr. Rogers has a photo of Jesus above his computer and a magnet on his refrigerator that says: "God Cares for You." Scattered around the house are pictures of his two children, and glamour shots of his wife in skimpy spandex outfits

from her days as a cheerleader for the Sacramento Kings basketball team.

A land developer's son, he grew up in California, absorbed in sports. After graduating in December, he got a job as a drill sergeant of sorts for Rite of Passage, a boot-camp-style rehabilitation program for juvenile delinquents conducted in the Nevada desert. In his living room, with his daughter on his lap, Mr. Rogers insists he is "not just some crackpot."

Ms. Marrow's lecture, he says, wasn't an exercise in teaching but an exercise in abuse. "I wanted to vomit," he says.