

STERN: OPRAH TALKS DIRTIER

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March 20, 2004 -- Howard Stern accused Oprah Winfrey of being a fellow potty-mouth yesterday, saying the afternoon TV queen has aired the same kind of kinky sexual material for which he was being pilloried.

"If they fine me for this, then they got to fine Oprah - the darling of the world," Stern told listeners after trying to play a shocking excerpt of an Oprah show on teen sex.

"And if they fine Oprah, all hell is gonna break loose."

The shock jock pleaded on the air with his station's general manager to let him play a tape of Winfrey and her guests discussing an erotic activity known as "tossing the salad."

"This is Oprah Winfrey at 4 in the afternoon saying this - Oprah graphically discusses it," Stern told his K-Rock boss, Tom Chiusano.

On Thursday's Winfrey show, a writer for her magazine *O* explained in meticulous detail what she described as popular sexual pastimes for America's teenagers, including oral and anal sex practices.

The writer, Michelle Burford, also described in detail a variety of other slang sex terms.

"Don't bleep it," Stern pleaded with his producer. "This is what's going to expose the hypocrisy. This is our Battle of the Bulge."

"If they fine me, they have to fine her," he added. "Can you imagine the headline 'Oprah Winfrey fined for indecency?'"

Chiusano put Stern's rant on hold for 10 minutes and sought counsel from Infinity Broadcasting lawyers after Stern threatened to call Mel Karmazin, president of Infinity-parent Viacom.

The lawyers turned down his request, and Stern's wary producers kept the sexual references off the air.

"Under the standards as they now exist, our answer is, do we believe that that's indecent? No, we don't," Chiusano said. "Do we believe that *they* [the FCC] believe it is? Yes."

A spokeswoman for the FCC's Enforcement Bureau told The Post she hadn't seen any complaints about Oprah's show. Typically, the FCC doesn't act or comment on controversial broadcasts until a complaint is received.

FCC guidelines also weigh in factors such as context and material that "appears to pander or is used to titillate or shock."

A Winfrey spokesperson said her show was on production hiatus and that Oprah was unavailable for comment.

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