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Northwest Portland abortion clinic sued: Former worker claims supervisor touched patients inappropriately



(http://connect.oregonlive.com/user/agreen/index.html) By **Aimee Green, The Oregonian**
 (http://connect.oregonlive.com/user/agreen/posts.html)

on November 01, 2012 at 2:26 PM, updated November 02, 2012 at 10:36 AM

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A former employee of a Northwest Portland abortion clinic is suing the clinic for at least \$165,000 claiming managers did nothing to address her complaints about a registered nurse inappropriately touching sedated patients.

File A suit filed by Kimberly Binnington, who worked as a surgical technician at **Lovejoy Surgicenter**

(http://www.lovejoysurgicenter.com/), claims her supervisor -- Evie Gradwohl -- often spoke "about patients in a demeaning and inappropriate manner, including expressing negative judgments about their clothing, bodies and hygiene."

The suit states that Gradwohl fondled one patient's breasts and drew a bird on an unconscious patient, then posted about it on Facebook last February.

Binnington's Portland attorney, Katelyn Oldham, said the patient later discovered the drawing, which apparently had been sketched in marker.

Gradwohl, 36, made the following statement Friday:

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"I am appalled by these allegations made against me. Although I wish to be able to defend myself, I have been advised by legal counsel not to comment."

"Given the sensitive nature of this case, I fear for the safety of myself and family from anti-choice groups and individuals," Gradwohl said. "I am devastated that my name has been made public, and (by) the impact this will have on my character and career."

Gradwohl was terminated in July, said Kayla Reich, administrator for the clinic.

Reich said she couldn't talk about the suit, "which is really painful because we have a lot we want to comment about." But she said the allegations in the suit are "shocking," especially because "some of the information in the lawsuit was never shared with us when she (Binnington) was an employee."

Staff professionalism is of the utmost importance, Reich said. "We've been here since 1971 and no complaints have been filed like this against us ever," she said.

The clinic's website states that it's the largest abortion provider in the tri-county Portland area -- having performed 55 percent of the area's 7,111 abortions in 2008.

Portland police said they hadn't received any complaints about Gradwohl. Records with the **Oregon Board of Nursing (<http://www.oregon.gov/osbn/Pages/index.aspx>)** state Gradwohl's registered nursing license as active. Board records also note that no discipline has been taken against her since she became licensed in Oregon in 2005.

Board spokeswoman Barbara Holtry said she couldn't comment on whether an investigation was underway, but learning of alleged inappropriate conduct through media coverage could spur an investigation.

Binnington started working at the clinic in January 2011 and Binnington began to notice problems a short while later, according to the suit, which was filed last week in Multnomah County Circuit Court. The suit claims that among the problems, Gradwohl showed Binnington her newly augmented breasts and "tried to get her to feel them."

The suit claims that Binnington complained to a manager in January -- about a year after she started work -- but no one ever followed up with her, and Gradwohl continued to supervise her. In April, Binnington reported to the same manager that Gradwohl had thrown a hanger at her at work, the suit states.

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Binnington's suit says she reported ongoing harassment in May, at which point she gave notice she was leaving in two weeks. She quit on June 2.

-- Aimee Green (<https://blog.advance.net/mt-static/html/agreen@oregonian.com>); [FOLLOW ME ON twitter](#) (http://www.twitter.com/o_aimee)



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SuzB (http://connect.oregonlive.com/user/suzanne_belatti/index.html)

Ms. Green will you be doing a follow up to this story to share that the Oregon State Board of Nursing (OSBN) has issued an order banning abortion nurse Evett Gradwohl from "practicing as a Registered Nurse in any capacity or functioning as a caregiver in any setting" until further order from the Board?

Also, there is no mention that she allegedly told other employees to lie to state inspectors about the fact than an unlicensed and unqualified worker was overseeing abortion surgeries.

It would be nice to see that women's rights in regards to harrassment and safe medical procedures are protected as strongly as their "rights" to abortion.

Lovejoy surgicenter is a facility that provides surgical, late term (3rd trimester) abortions in our city. Should people not be demanding extreme health regulations for such a facility, if they truly want safe, legal abortions for women? It doesn't appear that the most professional staff are employed at this facility. Did it take a lawsuit for something to

be addressed with this situation?

I imagine if a local dentist or chiropractor had such an issue, it would be headline news.

 (<http://oregonlive.com/>)

12 Hours Ago (http://oregonlive.com/portland/index.ssf/2012/11/northwest_portland_abortion_cl.html/post/2012-11-08/1352445809-840-9.html)

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fredbox (<http://connect.oregonlive.com/user/fredbox/index.html>)

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f0rtylegz (<http://connect.oregonlive.com/user/f0rtylegz/index.html>)

So Kimberly Binnington is suing because a Dr. Gradwohl spoke disrespectfully of some patients, drew a bird on an unconscious patient, touched an unconscious patients breast, and invited Ms Binnington to touch her breast after she had them "augmented." What are her damages? I think she and her lawyer should have to PAY if they lose. This case is a waste of time.

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mawesome (<http://connect.oregonlive.com/user/mawesome/index.html>)

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What are her damages? Well, to start, sexual harassment. That's illegal you know, and not just when men do it.

nnect Gradwohl sounds like an odious woman.

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chiphilton (<http://connect.oregonlive.com/user/chiphilton/index.html>)

Is Ms. G still looking for someone to ... inspect the merchandise ...

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Every industry has their weirdos.

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leo1234 (<http://connect.oregonlive.com/user/leo1234/index.html>)

* *

So why does Binnington deserve \$165,000 (other than for greed)?

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Crazed Sex Poodle (<http://connect.oregonlive.com/user/CrazedSexPoodle/index.html>)

"The suit states that Gradwohl ... drew a bird on an unconscious patient,"

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Aimee Green, The Oregonian (<http://connect.oregonlive.com/user/agreen/index.html>)

I should have written in the story that \$15,000 of the money Kimberly Binnington is seeking is for lost wages and benefits of unemployment. She's still looking for a new job.

The remaining \$150,000 she is seeking is for non-economic damages -- i.e. emotional distress and suffering. The suit claims that she suffered health problems as a result of the alleged harassment at work.

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leo1234 (<http://connect.oregonlive.com/user/leo1234/index.html>)

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Baloney, I suggest that the majority of these monies are the prompter of greed...

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