



TREMONT & SHELDON P.C.

Personal Injury Trial Lawyers Serving Connecticut for Over 50 Years

Fall 2009

Injury & Compensation Report

Specialty Areas:

- Auto & Motorcycle Injuries
- Catastrophic Injuries
- Defective Products
- Legal Malpractice
- Medical Malpractice
- Premises Liability
- Sexual Abuse
- Workplace Injuries
- Wrongful Death

All materials in this newsletter are for purposes of general information only – nothing in the newsletter should be considered legal advice. Individuals are urged to seek the advice of an attorney before taking any action on matters reviewed in this newsletter.

TREMONT & SHELDON ATTORNEYS LEAD FIGHT IN CHILD PORNOGRAPHY LAWSUIT

In November of 2007, citizens of Connecticut were shocked when the West Hartford Police Department discovered what is believed to be the single largest collection of child pornography in the world. The police discovered approximately 80,000 slides and photographs in the wall of the former home of Dr. George Reardon, a physician on staff at St. Francis Hospital in Hartford. The photographs were deeply disturbing even to the experienced law enforcement officers who found them.

Dr. Reardon, who died in 1998, practiced medicine at St. Francis from 1963 to 1993. During his time at St. Francis Hospital, Dr. Reardon served as the Director of the Endocrinology Laboratories. As a result of his position, he had extraordinary access to children. Dr. Reardon would approach the parents of these children and encourage the parents to allow their kids to participate in what Dr. Reardon described to be a "Growth Study" that he was performing.

Assuming only the best of Dr. Reardon, the parents agreed to allow their children to be taken to St. Francis Hospital to be measured and photographed by him. The children would continue to go to the hospital as they

progressed through childhood and into their teenage years. The parents were unaware that the pictures being taken of their kids were obscene.

The discovery of the photographs attracted national attention. As a result of the publicity, approximately 130 persons who had been molested and photographed by Dr. Reardon during the course of the Growth Study came forward and filed lawsuits against St. Francis Hospital.



Secret Storage

(West Hartford Police Department / November 28, 2007)

West Hartford Police were dispatched to a residence on Griswold Drive for a report that the homeowner found a large quantity of child pornography. The resident had been renovating the household basement and found a secret storage area where thousands of slides and video containing images of child pornography had been hidden.

The allegations against St. Francis Hospital include that St. Francis Hospital was negligent in allowing Dr. Reardon to essentially have unchecked access to these children. For 30 years Dr. Reardon did not publish any "Growth Study". Yet, the hospital never inquired as to why hundreds, if not thousands, of kids were being photographed naked in his office. Nobody asked where the photographs were being kept. Nobody at the hospital seemed interested enough to investigate further to determine what it was exactly that Dr. Reardon was doing at St. Francis Hospital.

A number of victims of Dr. Reardon who did step forward to file a claim retained Tremont & Sheldon, P.C. to represent them. Tremont & Sheldon was one of the first firms in Connecticut to represent adults who had been sexually abused when they were children and has a proven track record of successfully resolving these cases.

Attorneys Jason Tremont and Douglas Mahoney quickly filed lawsuits on behalf of our clients in order to aggressively pursue the merits of their claims. Due to the extraordinary number of lawsuits that were filed, all of the cases against St. Francis Hospital were consolidated and assigned to a judge who

(continued on page 3)

The Hidden Dangers of Facebook and How to Avoid Them



Over the past few years Facebook has swept the nation. It first started out as a social networking tool for college students and has blossomed into a billion dollar company that has become part of our daily lives. From tweens to soccer moms to politicians, it seems like everyone today has a Facebook account. It is a wonderful way to stay in touch and keep connected with family, friends, and colleagues; however, there are some hidden dangers.

Often people do not realize that the information that they post on their Facebook account is accessible to individuals that they never intended. A survey in June by careerbuilder.com found that 45 percent of employers used social network sites to research job candidates and that Facebook, which over 300 million users worldwide, was their site of choice. Approximately 35 percent of the employers surveyed said they had found content on the sites that had influenced them

to reject a candidate. Examples included inappropriate photographs, information about the applicants' drinking or drug use, or bad mouthing of previous employers, co-workers or clients.

Tweens and teens are not impervious to the perils of too much or inappropriate information posted on Facebook. According to a 2008 Kaplan study, one in ten college admissions officers routinely check out the college applicants' Facebook and other social networking pages. And some 38% of the admissions officers found posts and pictures that reflected poorly on those prospective students.

Even President Barack Obama warned young people in September 2009 about posting too much information on the Internet. When answering a question about some advice on becoming the president, he responded "... let me give you some practical tips. First of all, I want everybody here to be careful about what you post on Facebook, because in the YouTube age, whatever you do, it will be pulled up again later somewhere in your life."

So how can you protect yourself while maintaining a Facebook account? First of

all, if you wouldn't say or show in public what you are about to post on Facebook, then you probably should leave that information off your account. In order to protect your account and control who sees your information, you should make sure that your Privacy Settings are up to date (and set to a level that you feel comfortable with) and that you only accept friend's requests from people you know.

Some quick changes to your Privacy Settings that make a big difference:

1. To remove yourself from Facebook search results: Visit your search privacy settings page. Under "Search Visibility" select "Only Friends". (Remember, doing so will remove you from Facebook search results, so make sure you want to be removed totally. Otherwise, you can select another group, such as "My Networks and Friends").
2. To remove yourself from public search listings such as Google, go to the privacy settings page listed in the previous step. Turn off your public search

listing by simply unchecking the box next to the phrase "Create a public search listing for me and submit it for search engine indexing."

3. To prevent unwanted pictures being attached to your account, use the same privacy setting page and modify the setting next to "Photos Tagged of You." Select the option that says "Customize..." Select the option "Only Me" and then "None of My Networks" if you would like to keep all tagged photos private. If you'd like to make tagged photos visible to certain users, you can choose to add them in the box under the "Some Friends," option. In the box that displays after you select "Some Friends" you can type either individual friends or friend lists.

Facebook is a fun and useful Internet application and, with a few adjustments, can be safe as well.

At Which Court Is My Case Filed?

The state court system is divided into 14 regional districts across Connecticut. A case must be filed in the district that you or the person whom you sue lives. The Bridgeport courthouse covers all of southern Fairfield County along with the Stamford courthouse. Persons living in Bridgeport, Stratford, Fairfield,

Trumbull, and Monroe as well as Westport, Norwalk, Stamford and Wilton can bring their cases to either place.

The Milford courthouse covers Ansonia, Derby, Orange, Seymour, Shelton and Milford. The Danbury courthouse covers upper Fairfield County including Newtown, Bethel, Ridgefield, and Danbury.

New Haven County is covered by the courthouse in New Haven. If persons live in different places, we have the choice of court. Tremont & Sheldon's experience allows us to choose the courthouse that we believe is the most advantageous for a successful result in your case.



Attorney Cindy Robinson Inducted into American College of Trial Lawyers



Attorney Cindy Robinson has become a Fellow of the American College of Trial Lawyers, one of the premier legal associations in America.

The induction ceremony at which Cindy Robinson became a Fellow took place during the recent 2009 fall meeting of the College in Boston, Massachusetts.

Founded in 1950, the College is composed of the best of the trial bar from the United States and Canada. Fellowship in the College is extended by invitation only and only after careful investigation, to those experienced trial lawyers who have mastered the art of advocacy and whose professional careers have been marked by the highest standards of ethical conduct, professionalism, civility and collegiality.

Lawyers must have a minimum of 15 years of trial experience before they can be considered for fellowship. Fewer than 100 attorneys in Connecticut that have received this esteemed honor.

Congratulations to Attorney Cindy Robinson on your recent accomplishment and your unfaltering dedication to protecting and serving the injured.

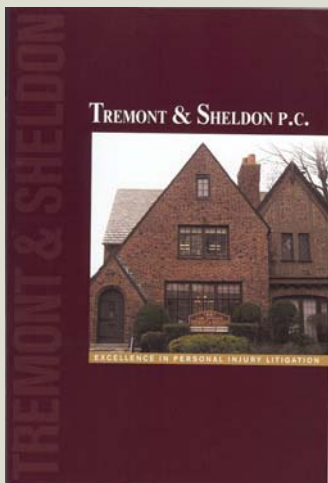
American College of Trial Lawyers Selection Process

The American College of Trial Lawyers is composed of the best of the trial bar from the United States and Canada and is widely considered to be the premier professional trial organization in America. Fellowship is extended only by invitation, after careful investigation, to those experienced trial lawyers who have mastered the art of advocacy and whose professional careers have been marked by the highest standards of ethical conduct, professionalism, civility and collegiality.

Although there are currently more than 5,739 Fellows across the U.S. and Canada, membership can never be more than 1% of the total lawyer population of any state or province. Qualified lawyers are called to Fellowship in the College from all branches of trial practice. They are selected from among advocates who represent plaintiffs or defendants in civil proceedings of all types, as well as prosecutors and criminal defense lawyers. The College is thus able to speak with a balanced voice on important issues affecting the administration of justice.



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TREMONT & SHELDON ATTORNEYS LEAD FIGHT IN CHILD PORNOGRAPHY LAWSUIT

(continued from page 1)

is sitting in Waterbury, Connecticut. In total there are approximately 130 people who have filed suit against the hospital. These victims are represented by many different lawyers. Just recently all of the victims' lawyers agreed to ask the court to name a group of five lawyers, including Attorney Mahoney, to serve as lead counsel in the cases for the victims. The fact that one of our lawyers was asked to serve in that capacity is in part due to the recognition of the many years of work Tremont & Sheldon has dedicated to representing victims of sexual abuse.

Persons who have been sexually abused when they were children have until their

48th birthday to pursue a claim against not only their abuser but also against any other entity that may be responsible for their abuser's conduct. In the case of Dr. Reardon, it is St. Francis Hospital who is responsible for his conduct.

To date, Tremont & Sheldon has represented well over 100 victims of childhood sexual abuse by clergy, teachers, and other authority figures. Tremont & Sheldon was one of the first law firms in the country to bring a claim against the Catholic Church and has collected approximately \$50 million on behalf of victims of sexual molestation.

Being sexually assaulted or abused as a child leaves



permanent scars on our clients. However, we are confident that in coming forward and speaking out about the terrible things that happened to them as children, they have undoubtedly raised the public's awareness of these abuses, resulting in the formation and implementation of sexual abuse prevention policies. Hopefully, vigilant enforcement of these policies will prevent future assaults upon children.

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Please visit us at:

www.tremont-sheldon.com

Free parking directly on our
premises across from City Hall.

To be placed on our mailing list,
contact us via phone or email.

GIVING BACK TO THE COMMUNITY...

The Bridgeport Connecticut law office of Tremont & Sheldon is proud to support the community. We not only give back by the cases we represent, but also by the many charitable organizations that we support through donations and volunteerism.

Through the years we have been the proud supporter of many organizations including MADD, The Survivors Network of Those Abused

by Priests (SNAP), Connecticut Sexual Assault Crisis Services (CONN SACS), American Brain Tumor Association, The Greater Bridgeport Old-timers Athletic Association, Appalachia Service Project, Mercy Learning Center, The Child Guidance Center Greater Bridgeport (CGCGB) and The Center for Women and Families, to name a few. Our attorneys and staff have collected food for the less fortunate, distributed bike helmets to children, and sponsored families during the holiday season.

Currently, Tremont & Sheldon is very proud to be a sponsor of **The Big Read**, where communities have the opportunity to read and discuss a single book.

This year's book is **The Maltese Falcon**. Themed events and activities throughout October and November will be held in Bridgeport and Shelton. Lectures, museum exhibits, film screening, mystery hunts, a live radio drama, and even a 24-hour read-a-thon will all be part of the fun.

Please visit www.barnum-museum.org for more information.



About Our Organization...

Tremont & Sheldon has represented thousands of injured persons. A number of our attorneys are recognized by **The Best Lawyers in America®** and have the highest possible rating from **Martindale-Hubbell®**. Attorneys Sheldon, Robinson, Bailey, Tremont and Mahoney have been named as CT Super Lawyers by Law and Politics Magazine.



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