

WEIGHTRESS OUTRAGE AT PUB SEX-HARASS LAWSUIT

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Two ex-waitresses at a trendy East Side bar are serving up a heavy-duty, \$15 million sex-harassment lawsuit, accusing their former bosses of ordering female employees to be weighed as part of a bizarre scheme to keep tabs on their poundage.

"They told me I needed to get on the scale," said one of the women, Kristen McRedmond, about her humiliating experience in a manager's office at Sutton Place Bar and Restaurant in July.

"I told them I'm not going to be part of your sick game," recalled McRedmond, 27, who said she physically resisted when a beefy manager tried to pick her up to get her on the scale while another manager looked on.

"I just felt so violated."

McRedmond and fellow former Sutton Place waitress Alexandria Lipton, 25, both said the scale episode came a few weeks after a top manager at the Second Avenue watering hole had walked around with pen and pad in hand demanding to know how much all the waitresses weighed so he could record the results.

"The manager, Neil, came over to me and asked me how much I weigh. I said, 'I don't know.' He looks me up and down, and he goes, '135' . . . Then he writes down my weight," Lipton said.

Both women said only a few male workers were singled out for the weigh-ins and questions about their weight, and that it was done without explanation. And they claim the managers would criticize waitresses - but not waiters - for ordering fatty fried food for their own dinners.

They also claim that waitresses' individual weights were tracked on a computer spreadsheet - and the results placed on a Web site that tracked the weights of waitresses in other establishments in the city. "I've been doing sexual-harassment law for 20 years, and this has to be the most egregious case of degradation to women that I have ever seen," said the women's lawyer, Rosemarie Arnold. "It's unbelievable." Arnold and her co-counsel, Joseph Tacopina, today are filing suit on behalf of the women in Manhattan Supreme Court against Sutton Place and its owner, Richard Kassis, as well as managers including Neil, who is listed as "Neil Doe" because his last name is unknown.

The suit accuses the defendants of sexual harassment and illegally firing McRedmond and Lipton after they were overheard complaining about the weigh-ins, which, it says, had severely upset most other female workers.

Sutton Place's lawyer, Joel Simon, denied the allegations, calling them a "nice piece of fiction," but declined to address them point by point, and also declined to say why the women were fired. "I believe that once the facts are known, it will be seen that the individuals were fired due to their own fault, and not to do with anything related to these allegations," Simon said.

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