

Legal Ethics

Biff! Bam! Wallop! 2 Lawyers Duke it Out in Oregon Courthouse

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By Molly McDonough

Lawyers are used to being adversarial, but two lawyers in the Portland, Ore., area apparently elevated their conflict to an actual fistfight in front of a crowd of courthouse spectators last week.

Attorneys David Lawrence and Aaron Matusick had just left a Multnomah County landlord-tenant court hearing Thursday when they began shouting at each other, the Portland Oregonian reports.

"Although it's not clear exactly who did what, witnesses said one man slapped the other and the other responded with a punch to the forehead," the paper reports.

Both men were next called to Judge Pro-Tem Lewis Lawrence's chambers for "a talking-to." The Oregonian reports that the judge determined each man was equally responsible, ordered them to apologize and said he'd ban them from his courtroom if the let it happen again.

Judge Lawrence, no relation to the lawyer, told the paper he would not report the men to the state bar and no citations were issued, even though several witnesses were reportedly sheriff's deputies.

"Isolated incidents are not a good gauge of who someone is," Judge Lawrence is quoted saying.

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