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Debunking Susan Saladoff's "Hot Coffee"

Jim Dedman reviews trial-lawyer Susan Saladoff's Hot Coffee documentary, which tells one side of the story of the McDonald's coffee case, but not a fair representation of the other side, which I discuss in detail in this 2009 Washington Examiner op-ed about the making of the movie.

I've spoken about this case in talks to law schools across the country for years. The producer of the movie, Carly Hugo, emailed me asking to interview me on the pretense that they wanted to provide "both sides," but provided a release that made it clear the filmmakers could misquote me at will. When I asked for a modification of the release to ensure that I would be quoted accurately, they suddenly didn't want to interview me any more and I never heard from them again. I seem to have made a good decision in refusing to give the producers carte blanche: as the New York Times documents, tort-reformer Victor Schwartz was selectively edited to promote the filmmaker's litigation-lobby bias.

I've also previously written about the Jamie Leigh Jones case featured in the movie; and anyone who buys the movie's claim that Oliver Diaz was unfairly treated should read Walter Olson's contemporaneous coverage of his criminal trials.

Update: Glenn Garvin's Miami Herald review says "Hot Coffee is done in by its essential dishonesty. ... Makes you wonder if there's a legal remedy for documentarian malpractice."

POSTED BY TED FRANK AT 7:57 AM

Tags:hot coffee , Jamie Leigh Jones , McDonald's , Oliver Diaz , Susan Saladoff , Trial Lawyers Inc.

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