



producers of *hustlers* hustle up a win in lawsuit: sdny dismisses claims for invasion of privacy and defamation in *barbash v. stx financing*

Written by Leo M. Lichtman

MSK Client Alert

November 23, 2020

Earlier this month, the Southern District of New York gave its stamp of approval to the hit film *Hustlers*, when it dismissed an action for invasion of privacy and defamation brought by Samantha Barbash, the real-life ringleader of an illegal conspiracy that influenced the film. In its order of dismissal, the court provided important guidance on New York's invasion of privacy law and the standards for defamation.

The case concerns the film *Hustlers*, which was released last year and stars Jennifer Lopez as Ramona—the ringleader of a group of adult dancers who engaged in a scheme to drug rich patrons and steal their money. *Hustlers* is not a work of pure fiction, but rather was inspired by Barbash's story. Barbash—who worked at the Score's Gentleman's Club and Hustler's Club in Manhattan—pled guilty to conspiracy, assault, and grand larceny in 2015. That same year, *New York Magazine* published an article titled "The Hustlers at Scores," which described the scheme to which Barbash pled guilty and reported that Barbash had "come up with the innovation that was making her rich: a special drink spiked with MDMA and ketamine" that was given to the scheme's victims. The magazine article served as the inspiration for the film...

[View Full Alert](#)

practice areas

entertainment & ip litigation

intellectual property

litigation