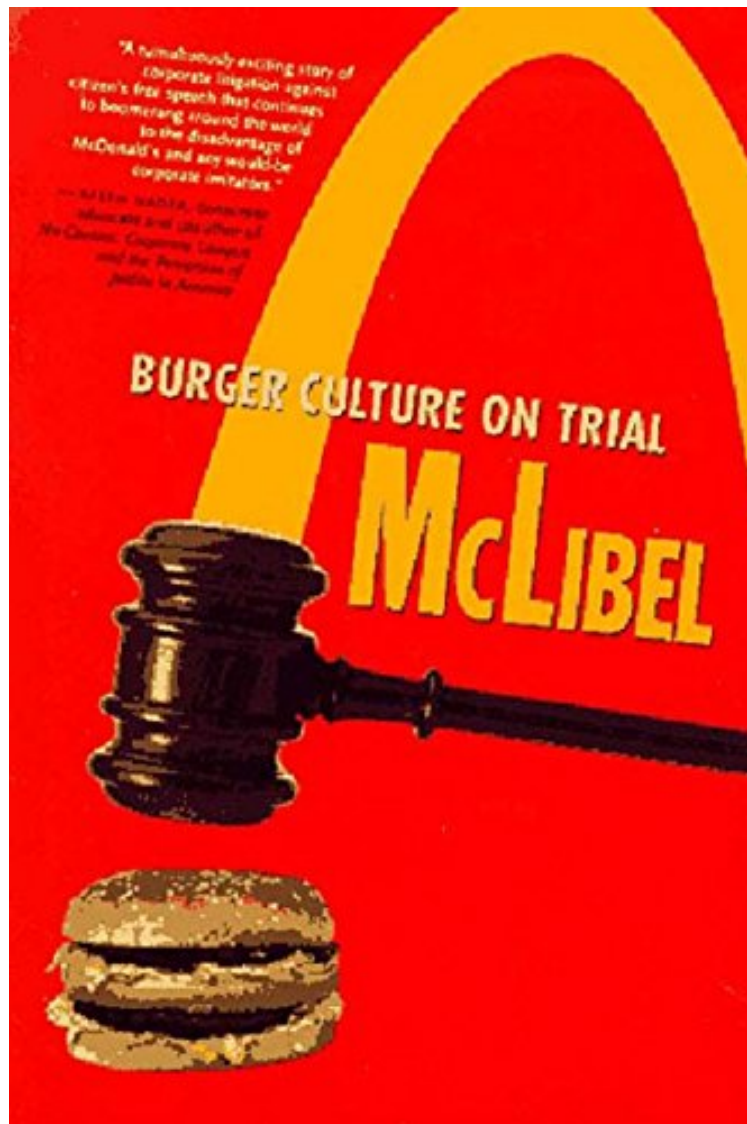


## McLibel: Burger Culture on Trial

John Vidal

ebooks | Download PDF | \*ePub | DOC | audiobook



DOWNLOAD



READ ONLINE

#2996646 in Books New Press, The 1997-11-01 Original language: English PDF # 1 9.56 x 1.27 x 6.45l, 1.67  
#File Name: 1565844114354 pages | File size: 30.Mb

**John Vidal : McLibel: Burger Culture on Trial** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised McLibel: Burger Culture on Trial:

2 of 5 people found the following review helpful. God Bless Ben and Friends For Throwing the Tea in the HarborBy TundraBeeBefore reading this book, I was under the silly impression that the British legal system, from which ours evolved, was closer to us than it evidently is. It is a reminder that we've come a long way in the development of jurisprudence since Declaring our Independence. McLibel is a true tale of once upon a time, not so very long ago

(1990 - 1997) when the Davids took on a Goliath (Ronald McDonald and his Big Bad Corporation) in not-so-Merry-Old England. Two unemployed activists had distributed leaflets, (which they neither wrote nor produced,) that had the audacity to criticize the corporate giant. The two, who were unable to afford attorneys, were put to a Kafka-esque Kangaroo (with apologies to residents of Australia) Court trial, the likes of which, were it to appear on Saturday Night Live, would be condemned as Theatre of the Absurd. The author describes the protracted trial: "Like the interminable case of *Jarndyce v. Jarndyce* in Charles Dickens' *Bleak House*, *McDonald's Corporation and McDonald's Restaurants Ltd. vs. Helen Marie Steel and David Morris* (popularly known as the *McLibel* case) drone(d) on in claustrophobic isolation." One of the most striking things about *McLibel*, to the American sensibility, is the arcane, archaic, bizarre, Byzantine Quagmire of British libel law. The book is sometimes difficult to digest. There are no footnotes, endnotes, annotations, or other direct attribution of sources. I was disappointed that the Writ and other pleadings (actual legal papers which are the foundation of a lawsuit,) were not included in the Appendix. A reproduction of the offending leaflet would also have been helpful. The author, British "Environmental Journalist" John Vidal (Hey! Is he related to Gore Vidal?) frequently plagues the reader with his own protracted political polemics. But it is, nonetheless, enriched food for thought. Do you want fries with that? Here's an interesting bit of trivia included in the book: Ray Kroc, founding force behind McDonald's as we know it, was in the same World War I ambulance driving company as Walt Disney. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Goliath vs. Legal Davids By oldtora Two ordinary British people refused to be intimidated by a large American corporation. They exercised their right to protest against a corporation's business practices, and the corporation couldn't take the heat. The legal Davids did not fold. 4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Must Read RE Corporations the Environment By Bucherwurm An important book regarding the power of corporations, and the abuse of the environment. We Americans are fortunate that we do not have England's libel laws where corporations like McDonalds do not hesitate to use the law to squelch free speech. This is a fascinating book that follows the longest civil trial in British history. The author is able to summarize the trial without getting bogged down in the mass of testimony that was presented. The book's downside is that the author makes lengthy asides to preach on environmental issues. I share his concerns, but I bought the book to read about the specific issue of the trial itself.

*McLibel* is the unlikely but true story of how a pamphlet called *Whats Wrong with McDonalds?* led to the longest trial in British history. In what has become front-page news around the globe, the trial pitted the multibillion dollar corporation against five members of London Greenpeace accused by McDonalds of libel. Three activists capitulated and apologized; two persevered. *McLibel* tells the story of the *McLibel* Two and the two-and-a-half-year trial in which the jeansclad and impoverished defendants represented themselves against the best powdered-wig lawyers McDonalds could buy. Does the fast-food chain exploit children? Depress wages? Level South and Central American rain forests? Subject its cattle and chicken to mass slaughters? A final chapter explores these allegations and details the \$98,000 verdict against the activists Morris and Steel, which is widely viewed as a moral victory for the defendants and a public relations fiasco for McDonalds. Environmental reporter John Vidal covered all two and a half years of the trial. In the tradition of Michael Moores *Roger and Me*, he brings this David and Goliath story to life, shedding light on the corporate machinations of a secretive multinational company, the British legal system, and the implications for any individuals inclined to critique a \$30-billion-a-year powerhouse.

From *Library Journal* Vidal, an environmental reporter for the *London Guardian*, has written a breezy narrative of England's most costly and complex civil trial. The libel case, based on a political tract criticizing McDonald's anti-environment and anti-vegetarian corporate ethic and advertising strategy, was just recently decided in McDonald's favor on legal grounds. Nevertheless, many Britons see the case as a moral victory for the defendants, two members of London Greenpeace who represented themselves pro se and who forced McDonald's to spend millions on legal fees. Vidal offers an easy-to-follow account of the trial, but his primary focus is a broad analysis of the many environmental and social justice questions raised by the case. Surprisingly, this format works extraordinarily well. Vidal navigates artfully through each issue, ranging from the freedom of the English press and global corporate environmentalism to food safety and advertising aimed at children. A healthy dose of McDonald's history and profit statistics is thrown in as well. Recommended for all but the smallest libraries. ?Steven Anderson, Baltimore Cty. Circuit Court Law Lib., Towson, Md. Copyright 1997 Reed Business Information, Inc. From *Kirkus* sA lively account of the food fight that became the longest trial in British history. When a flyer entitled "What's Wrong with McDonald's" circulated around London, the burger giant took umbrage and sued Helen Steel and Dave Morris, members of London Greenpeace (an environmental group not affiliated with the international organization Greenpeace), for libel. Here Vidal, who covered the trial for the *London Guardian*, recounts some of the issues addressed and the difficulties faced by the two underdogs who, without benefit of a court-appointed lawyer or funds from legal aid, acted as their own attorneys in facing the corporation's crack legal team in a bench trial (they were denied a jury). British libel law required that Steel and Morris prove the accuracy of virtually every statement made in the flyer. The company may since have come to regret their suit: The pair, assisted by a network of volunteers, did a

very credible job of tracking down information in support of the flyer's claims. This effort leads Vidal to discussions of the nutritional value of McDonald's food; whether or not that food contained any beef raised on former rainforest land; the corporation's treatment of workers; and its reactions to employees' efforts to unionize. By the time Vidal is finished with such subjects, the Golden Arches look a little tarnished. But his account would have benefited from waiting for the verdict that was handed down this summer, and from concluding with more rumination on the case and less grandstanding on the evils of multinational corporations. Still, Vidal's blend of human interest and sheer outrageousness make this a ripping legal yarn. If the case itself hasn't already given Ronald McDonald indigestion, this book might. (8 pages bw photos, not seen) -- Copyright 1997, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved. "A fascinating case study for why Americans hold the Bill of Rights so dear, and a rollicking good read. Vidal brings this tale of free speech, corporate responsibility, and how they collide to life." #8212Nadine Strossen, national president of the American Civil Liberties Union and professor of law at New York Law School"McCensorship is hitting America. Shut up and eat. Or read this brave book and fight for free speech and safe food." #8212John Stauber, editor of PR Watch and co-author of Mad Cow U.S.A. and Toxic Sludge Is Good for You"In America, public criticism of a public institution is part of the right of free speech. . . . The McLibel case shows [British] civil law working at its expensive worst a ponderous and leisurely sledgehammer that has been trundled out to crack a nut." #8212John Mortimer, Sunday Times(UK)"Entertaining and informative." #8212The Guardian"An excellent history of McDonalds [that] . . . more than showing the archaic and baffling nature of British libel laws, ties in the global corporate culture in which McDonalds is a major player." #8212Tribune (UK)"In my dreams, McLibel will be a comic musical, with ba-boom! noises when the McLibel Two trick an opposition expert medical witness into agreeing with a passage of the alleged libel, a lawyers can-can led by Ronald McDonald, a soprano vegetarian emoting about the evils of indoctrinating the young while letting slip that she has personally lectured 30,000 schoolchildren on vegetarianism. . . . [But] even told seriously, the story compels." #8212Libby Purves, The Times (UK)