Alumni

# Making a Hit

Spring 2016

Netflix

As Columbia film students in 2005, Moira Demos ’96CC, ’08SOA and Laura Ricciardi ’07SOA stumbled across a *New York Times* story with an incredible plotline. A Wisconsin man named Steven Avery had served eighteen years in prison for a rape he didn’t commit. He was exonerated by DNA evidence and released, was hailed as a poster child for the Innocence Project, and sued the local police department for negligence. But as his suit was pending, Avery was arrested again — this time for murder.

Demos and Ricciardi packed their bags and moved to rural Wisconsin, where they spent the next ten years, off and on, filming what would become an increasingly complex case. The result was *Making a Murderer*, a ten-part documentary released on Netflix this past December 18. Like the podcast *Serial* and the HBO series *The Jinx*, the controversial documentary has clearly struck a nerve, inspiring everything from a Tumblr dedicated to the fashion of Avery's lawyers to a 300,000-person petition urging President Obama '83CC to pardon Avery (an impossibility, since Avery was convicted under state law). As a result of the documentary, the Wisconsin Innocence Project has agreed to reexamine Avery's case.

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