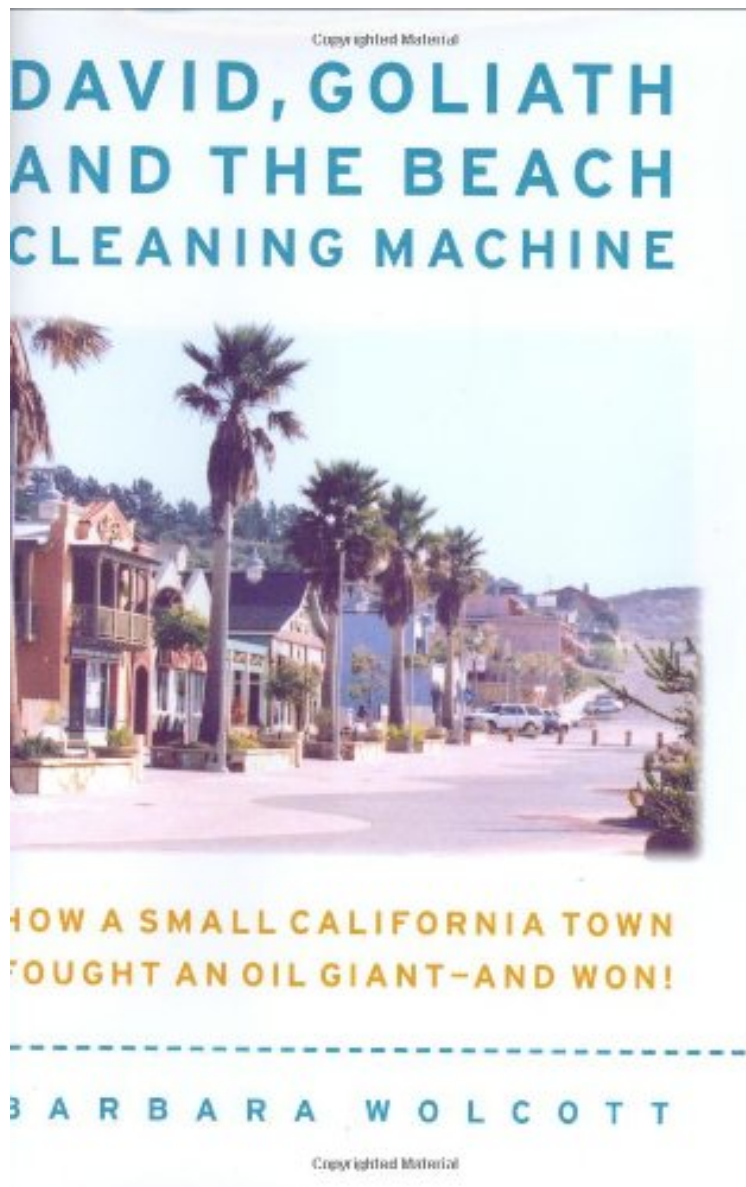


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David, Goliath and the Beach Cleaning Machine: How a Small California Town Fought an Oil Giant and Won (Capital Currents)

Barbara Wolcott

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Barbara Wolcott : David, Goliath and the Beach Cleaning Machine: How a Small California Town Fought an Oil Giant and Won (Capital Currents) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised David, Goliath and the Beach Cleaning Machine: How a Small California Town Fought an Oil

Giant and Won (Capital Currents):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars
By Mike Sinor
Really enjoyed this book.
0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Slip-sliding away
By Calochortus
A thought-provoking book that's an easy read. I grew up near Avila Beach and we all just accepted oily feet and hands as part of the beach experience. This is a wonderful book that shows the powers of big corporations to delay, obfuscate and derail justice, using high-powered lawyers, and the legal system against the people. It makes you proud that the system worked. And it makes you wonder what the big oil companies are up to now, or the mining companies, or other big businesses.
0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. David, Goliath and the Beach Cleaning Machine
By Ron Wootengreen
This is a compelling story and a page-turner of a book. My only problems with the book come down to two related issues and one editorial lapse. After introducing the fact that Erin Brockovich and attorney Ed Masry ("fresh from their success in Hinckley, California, with a major Pacific Gas and Electric settlement") showed up in Avila Beach ("to add to the community's confusion")(p. 81). The author only five pages later begins a paragraph with the statement, "The Pacific Gas and Electric (PGE) settlement was very important to Avila Beach..." At first one must assume that the settlement mentioned at page 86 is the Hinckley settlement. One must read on for three more paragraphs before one gets the hint that maybe the settlement referred to is not Hinckley but Diablo Canyon. Actually, this reader had to read pages 81-92 three times before he was able to make the connection. Secondly, the author continually castigates the Brockovich/Masry role in Avila Beach. This reader is not disputing Barbara Wolcott's assertions, but he is wondering why, after all the exhausting research and extensive interviews copiously rendered in the Bibliography, she did not obtain Brockovich and Masry's point of view? If they refused to be interviewed, then say so. Finally, at page 193 a poem by Stephen Vincent Benet appears with no attribution as to its publication source. Despite the above critical remarks, this is a must read, especially for those who doubt that Corporate America can do anything but good.

During an early morning run, Saro Rizzo, a young attorney from Avila Beach, California, stumbled yet again over picnic debris, and determined to get his little town a beach-cleaning machine. Ringed by mountains and nestled between Santa Barbara and Monterey, Avila Beach was an isolated little oil town of some four hundred aging hippies, scattered professionals, and active octogenarians. It was not a community of protestors. Rizzo innocently began his crusade by requesting a donation from the local oil giant Unocal. Through a series of events rich in deceit, controversy, and greed, a massive oil spill and an environmental disaster were exposed. Written by Pulitzer-prize-nominee Barbara Wolcott, "David, Goliath and the Beach-Cleaning Machine" is the hard-charging story of this heroic quest started by a son of immigrants, only two years out of law school, who rallies his town of fierce independents to take on a corporate giant -- and win big to the tune of \$18 million in damages as well as an estimated \$100-200 million for clean-up. Rizzos suit was the first of nearly sixty, including some filed by Ed Masry of Erin Brockovich fame. As a result of the massive clean-up, beautiful Avila Beach has been almost totally leveled and the townspeople are fighting to save those buildings that represent their history and sense of place. Now that the town is in the spotlight as a model of environmental rescue, the beach-cleaning machine has arrived!