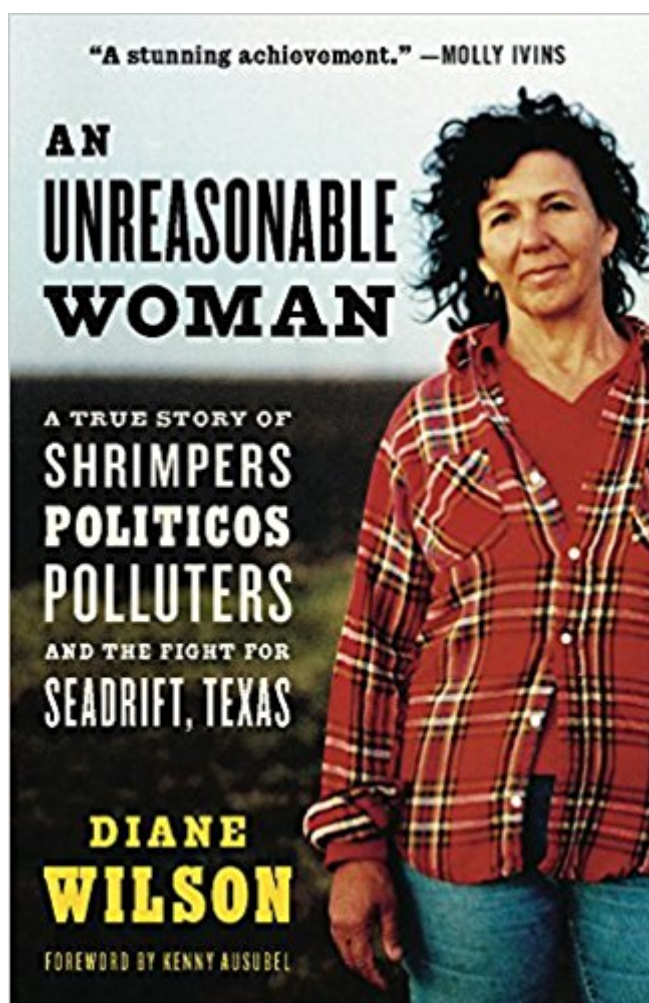


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# An Unreasonable Woman: A True Story Of Shrimpers, Politicos, Polluters, And The Fight For Seadrift, Texas



## Synopsis

When Diane Wilson, fourth-generation shrimp-boat captain and mother of five, learns that she lives in the most polluted county in the United States, she decides to fight back. She launches a campaign against a multibillion-dollar corporation that has been covering up spills, silencing workers, flouting the EPA, and dumping lethal ethylene dichloride and vinyl chloride into the bays along her beloved Texas Gulf Coast. In an epic tale of bravery, Wilson takes her fight to the courts, to the gates of the chemical plant, and to the halls of power in Austin. Along the way she meets with scorn, bribery, character assassination, and death threats. Finally Wilson realizes that she must break the law to win justice: She resorts to nonviolent disobedience, direct action, and hunger strikes. Wilson's vivid South Texas dialogue resides somewhere between Alice Walker and William Faulkner, and her dazzling prose brings to mind the magic realism of Gabriel Garcia Marquez, replete with dreams and prophecies.

## Book Information

Paperback: 392 pages

Publisher: Chelsea Green Publishing Company; 1st edition (September 15, 2006)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1933392274

ISBN-13: 978-1933392271

Product Dimensions: 5.9 x 0.9 x 8.7 inches

Shipping Weight: 4.8 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.3 out of 5 stars 30 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #1,339,388 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #60 in Books > Engineering & Transportation > Engineering > Chemical > Plant Design #917 in Books > Science & Math > Nature & Ecology > Ecosystems #1011 in Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Professionals & Academics > Environmentalists & Naturalists

## Customer Reviews

With the discovery that her "piddlin' little county on the Gulf Coast" led the nation in toxic emissions, shrimper Wilson, a mother of five, found herself embarking on a voyage of discovery and activism that would strain her marriage and stretch her horizons. A David up against big-time chemical Goliaths, Wilson is a gifted storyteller, rendering dialogue and pacing plot turns as a novelist might. Anonymous informants, uncomfortable whistleblowers, unanticipated opposition from civic powers and seductive offers of cash bribes pepper this first-person account of Wilson's attempts to save her

hometown. Although there are moments when the trail of meetings, memos and petitions seems drawn out, the tell-everything approach reveals how a woman awed to discover "they can lie on TV news! And it is all right!" can learn to master the media. Wilson's hunger-striking, boat-sinking and pole-climbingâ "combined with the help of a pro bono lawyer and a Greenpeace activistâ "ultimately wring a "zero tolerance" agreement out of Formosa Plastics and Dow/Union Carbide. Wilson's book is longer than it needs to be, but her Texas twang is catchy, and often spellbinding, as she goes about her mission, sometimes with a child "by one hand and a handful of documents in the other." (Sept.) Copyright Â© Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

In the battle to halt the monstrous pollution destroying Texas' Lavaca Bay, it seemed impossible that one little lady could take on a multibillion-dollar international chemical company and win--but win Wilson did. A minimally educated shrimp-boat captain and mother of five, Wilson suffered great personal tragedy, including death threats and divorce, in her frustrating and demoralizing crusade against Formosa Plastic's proposed \$1.3 billion expansion of its PVC manufacturing facility in Calhoun County, Texas, already deemed the most toxic district in the country. Armed with nothing more than her deep-seated love for the bay outside her door and an unwavering sense of justice, Wilson almost single-handedly set out to reveal the environmental destruction, worker intimidation, legal machinations, and political manipulation that epitomized Formosa's ruthless business practices. With unbridled passion, Wilson renders her "Diane-versus-Goliath" confrontation in honest and unadorned prose, liberally and gracefully lacing it with passages of heartbreaking lyricism and provocative wisdom that reveal the depth of her commitment. Few people in this world deserve to be called heroes; Wilson assuredly is one of them. Carol HaggasCopyright Â© American Library Association. All rights reserved --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

I'm currently labouring my way through this book. I'm finding this particular first-person presentation off-putting in the extreme. The dialog is rambling, the minutia is endless, the vernacular is thicker than a spring pile of manure in a winter barn, there's too much "shrimper" terminology and no explanation, characters aren't properly introduced. It's all just too confusing, and, for my money, the author's "voice" comes across as presumptuous, self-important, and irritating. I wanted to give this story one star; I relented and added the second due to the fact that, underneath all the rubble, I suspect lies a worthy story. I may have to give up on this one, something I virtually never do. Maybe

someday I'll see the movie...if it's ever made.

If you're interested in an exceptional first-person account of fighting big business, this is the book for you. Diane Wilson has created an entertaining, fast-moving narrative of what in reality was surely an incredibly slow-moving and frustrating battle against hypocrisy, corruption and the apathy of her neighbors. If the world is going to survive as a place where human beings and the environment can coexist to the benefit of both, it will do so because of people like Diane Wilson.

I had heard good things about this book, and it lived up to its reputation. This is an autobiography of an amazing woman - a role model for all people who are concerned about the health and safety of their families in industrial America. Her tenacity, creative solutions, and effort to educate herself on the issues and the processes was an inspiration. My only criticism is that there are a lot of colloquialisms and Texan grammar & slang to get through. I got used to the conversational style, and looked more intently at the heart of the story and was not disappointed. The work is believable, credible, and gives a good sense of what life in the coastal, industrial areas of Texas is like, how hard a shrimper's life is, and how some of these communities are hanging on for dear life. I could not put this book down. It is a compelling and important story of how our communities must come together to fight corporate power in order to secure our health, safety, and livelihoods.

I got this book as a free Kindle download and set out to read it not expecting much. I was extremely pleased with it, though, the more and more I read. It is a wonderful portrait of the beginnings of activism as well as an indictment of the corruption in business and politics where environmental issues are concerned. There are many good ideas to be found in this book other than the obvious: just why is it that the poor fisherman not following the rules finds those rules strictly enforced when a huge, multinational corporation doesn't see the same vigorous enforcement of environmental laws? How can workers bring to light poor working conditions without risking their incomes? There is so much in this book that makes one think, and how often can you say that about a book as enjoyable and easy to read as this one?

I started this book with high hopes, having been raised up the coast from Diane in Freeport in the shadow of Dow Chemical Company. I liked her voice and the horrors she described exist, but her book just sort of drifted off in an unsatisfying manner, sort of like the fight against her chemical company. Some sharp editing is needed in the last half of the book.

An inspiring story told by a feisty woman in her own voice. It is wonderful to see how she grows through her struggles and how her commitment deepens as time goes on. Highly recommended.

The whole issue was interesting and the story flowed pretty well until the last third of the book. Then it got tiresome and hard to follow. It needs a lot more editing.

Diane Wilson is not only an unreasonable woman she is an outstanding human being. She is a reluctant hero, the most authentic kind. She eventually stands up for her native waters, mother earth and the very survival of the human race. Doing something doesn't necessarily mean you can write well about it. In this case, Diane writes in her own authentic and electrifying voice. Her story rings true and reads like the most exciting fiction. I recommend this book to anyone who loves nature, adventure or just plain good reading.

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