

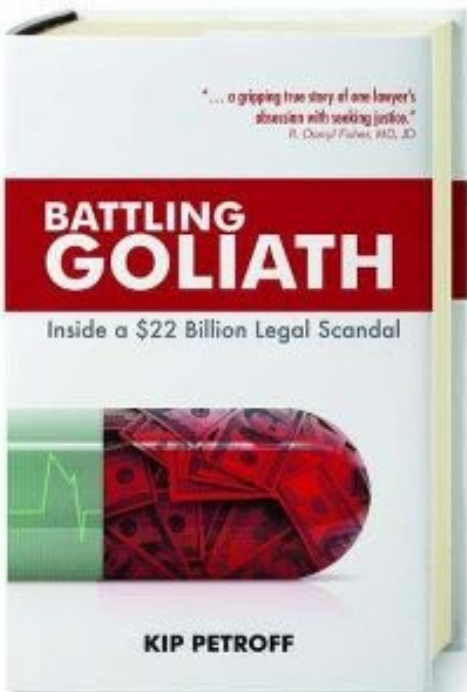
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Local lawyer takes on 'Goliath'

by Martha Tiller



“Have you ever taken fen-phen?” While it may seem like a story from last decade, this is a question surgical patients must still sometimes answer on their pre-op paperwork, because yesterday’s news is still today’s heartache. Six million unsuspecting Americans took this “magic” diet drug pill combo in the 1990s. Almost half a million got sick - or worse. The fallout from drug company malfeasance continues.

“Battling Goliath: Inside a \$22 Billion Legal Scandal” is a tell-all book by Kip Petroff, a gutsy Texas attorney who spent more than a decade fighting Wyeth Ayerst Pharmaceuticals and its lawyers on behalf of thousands of victims. Petroff won a mammoth \$23 million verdict that opened the gates for the stampede of what would become 100,000 potential cases in his firm alone.

The complex litigation revealed a host of shadowy back room pacts, threats, and fraud allegations. It also featured an unlikely series of events and a strange cast of characters, each driven by their own obsessions. The epic legal battle transcended courtrooms and boardrooms, taking a toll on Petroff’s personal and professional life. Petroff recounts his side of the fen-phen saga with brutal truth. Yet, it’s not over. More than 400,000 victims who registered for the original Class Action Settlement may still file for, and receive, additional compensation if their heart valve disease progresses to certain conditions by the earlier of Dec. 31, 2011, or 15 years after their last date of diet drug usage.

If ever there was a time to get a handle on your health, especially if you were a fen-phen user, it is now.