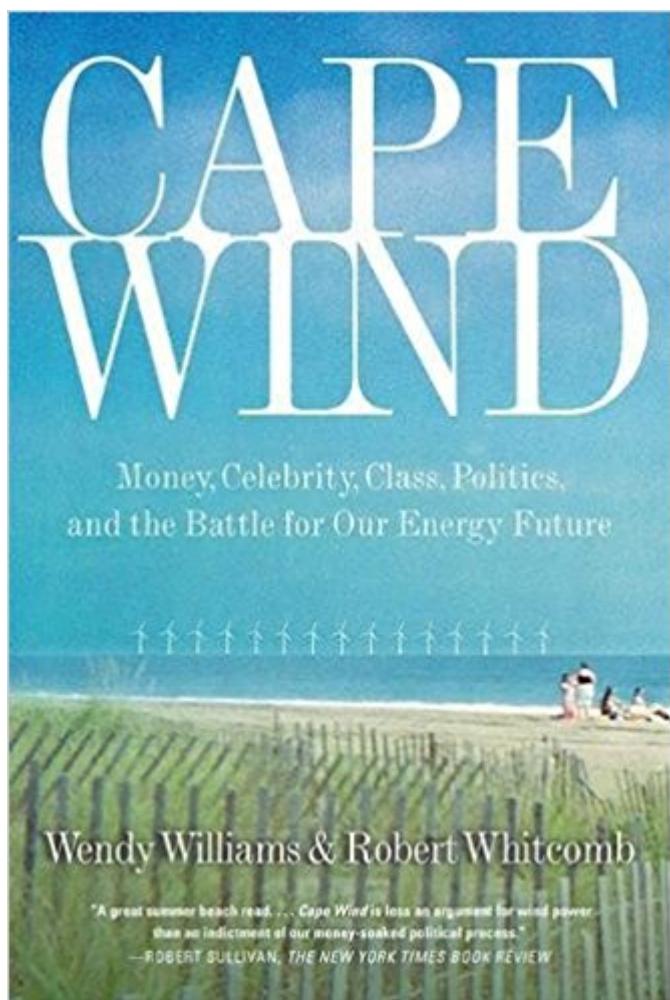


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# Cape Wind: Money, Celebrity, Energy, Class, Politics, And The Battle For Our Energy Future



## Synopsis

When Jim Gordon set out to build a wind farm off the coast of Cape Cod, he knew some people might object. But there was a lot of merit in creating a privately funded, clean energy source for energy-starved New England, and he felt sure most people would recognize it eventually. Instead, all Hell broke loose. Gordon had unwittingly challenged the privileges of some of America's richest and most politically connected people, and they would fight him tooth and nail, no matter what it cost, and even when it made no sense. *Cape Wind* is a rollicking tale of democracy in action and plutocracy in the raw as played out among colorful and glamorous characters on one of our country's most historic and renowned pieces of coastline. As steeped in American history and local color as *The Prince of Providence*; as biting, revealing and fun as *Philistines at the Hedgerow*, it is also a cautionary tale about how money can hijack democracy while America lags behind the rest of the developed world in adopting clean energy.

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## Customer Reviews

This well-reported assessment of democracy manipulated by powerful federal, state and local insiders, and other not-in-my-backyard shenanigans surrounding plans for a wind farm five miles off Cape Cod, is certainly upfront about its bias. Williams, a former journalist-in-residence at Duke University, and Whitcomb, editorial page editor of the *Providence Journal*, jauntily champion the cause of energy entrepreneur Jim Gordon's "bold idea" to plant 130 wind turbines in Nantucket

Soundâ€”â•a project still snared in a regulatory maze as this peppery account went to press. The authors decry what they call fear-mongering by Gordon's well-funded opponents (2005 contributions: \$3.3 million) and are particularly peeved by the obstructionism of Sen. Ted Kennedy, whose behind-the-scenes maneuvering is highlighted, as are the fulminations verging "on the incoherent" by environmentalist Robert Kennedy Jr.â•normally an outspoken opponent of coal-powered energy generation and a vigorous supporter of alternative energy sources. The Kennedys' stubborn opposition is shared by such moneyed neighbors as Listerine heiress Bunny Mellon and coal, oil and gas magnate William Koch, who are depicted as plutocratic bullies in this rambunctious, unsparing dissection of ruling-class abuse. (May) 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.

**\*Starred Review\*** Cape Cod is a place of celebrated beauty and blueblood history. For such powerful and wealthy families as the Kennedys and Mellons, the cape's beaches are a treasured sanctuary. But because Massachusetts' population has grown, the state's aging power grid is under enormous pressure. Enter Jim Gordon, an energy entrepreneur who believed he had the perfect solution: an offshore wind farm. His 2001 Cape Wind proposal shocked and enraged Cape Cod's elite, and so began an epic battle that pits privilege against the common good in a stunning exposure of NIMBY (not in my backyard) hypocrisy. Journalists Williams, who lives on Cape Cod, and Whitcomb, who has family ties to the area, do a bang-up job of chronicling Gordon's tenacity in the face of the brazen machinations of various politicians, especially Senator Edward Kennedy and then governor and current Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney. This true-life tale of a blinding love of place, outrageously irresponsible propaganda, shameful congressional maneuvering, and egregious social injustice is half farce, half political thriller, and altogether compelling. As the fight rages on, Cape Wind serves as a harbinger of future conflicts as we reluctantly consider alternatives to oil. Donna SeamanCopyright Â© American Library Association. All rights reserved --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Cape Wind is a factual account of the political and social conspiracy that continues to oppose an innovative and needed project. Having lived in a similar through-the-looking-glass world during the development of an energy project and grown up in Southeastern Massachusetts I was prepared to read about bad behavior by elected officials in opposing Jim Gordon's project. The authors have dug deeply behind the events to put the situation into its shocking context and in the process

exposed selfish behaviors that were inconsistent with reasonable man's interpretation of public policy and achieving the greatest common good. Some politicians are exposed as fools, Kennedy family members like Ted and RFK Jr have demonstrated that this is their natural state, but Governor Romney's staunch unwillingness to reconsider his opposition to the project in light of compelling facts casts him in a very poor light. The book is recommended reading, even if it does nothing else other than to increase the reader's skepticism when listening to candidates and officeholders blather on about energy independence when they have no clue about what it means or the tradeoffs involved.

Cape Wind reads like a humorous suspense novel. I found it hard to put it down, and had to check out their website to make sure it would have a happy ending. The shenanigans of the political elite, (maybe Robert Kennedy, Jr. (*Crimes Against Nature: How George W. Bush and His Corporate Pals Are Plundering the Country and Hijacking Our Democracy*) ought to read it!) the gullibility of the people they used (like Walter Cronkite), and the tenacity of our hero Jim Gordon are fascinating and breathtaking. The authors know how to use humor to make their point, which makes Cape Wind a fun "beach read!" Who has the movie rights?

There's too much happening here to not have a well executed and informative documentary on this. It may seem like a small issue to those outside of it, but its implications reach much further than the Cape. Read this easy to follow and well written account of this project and engage yourself into today's questions about our planet and our political stratosphere.

Cape Wind is a marvelous story of political hypocrisy on parade. When an energy entrepreneur proposed to build a wind farm to generate energy in Nantucket Sound, he did not bargain for the opposition of some of the rich and powerful who live and play in the vicinity. A small but powerful group of people, which include not only the Kennedy family but Mitt Romney, former governor and current candidate for President, are bound and determined not to have their view of the "pristine" waters around their summer mansions. Cape Wind would be a comedy, with its spectacle of Lear Jet liberals, who say they support clean energy in the abstract, twisting themselves into knots trying to justify opposition to clean energy just because it is in their back yard. But the book is all too true and more the pity.

An excellent balanced review of the controversy surrounding the first attempt to construct wind

farms offshore in the USA.

"Cape Wind" is a must read for all who care about our environment, our health, our continued self-imposed dependence on foreign oil and fossil fuels in general, our world-class backwardness with regard to renewable energy sources, and our vulnerability to the personal desires of the rich and infamous. It's a lively read--probably one you won't be able to put down once you begin.

Outside a Cape Wind public hearing at MIT in Cambridge, a group of activists put on an amusing parody of the moneyed interests fighting the wind power project, which is seeking approval for a site in Nantucket Sound off Cape Cod. Dressed in yacht club apparel, the protesters, sporting an affected speech, introduce themselves using names such as "Preston Peabody IV." They explain, in mock seriousness, all of their reasons for opposing the wind farm. The authors of Cape Wind go on to give a very lengthy transcript of this performance. In fact, I was pretty amazed at how long the segment was in the book, it just kept going. Then, I realized that this little skit was more than just a funny parody; it was exactly how the authors really viewed the rich opponents of this project. And that is ultimately the slight undoing of this timely and gripping tale. The book is a really fun read. I believe a blurb on the back cover says it is a "beach read." And so it is, containing all the elements one would find in a best-selling political thriller, but written in a breezy tone. Unfortunately, that tone crosses into snarkiness too often. And it becomes very clear within a few chapters that the Cape Wind opponents will play the corrupt beaurecrats, the stooge selectmen, or the elitists frothing at the mouth. How both business and the elite use government is the real thesis though. Local town meetings become showcases of celebrities, money is channeled through other non-profits and Army Corps of Engineer hearings are swamped with paid operatives who have connections to political campaigns. Meanwhile, in the Senate, secret committee meetings try to amend legislation for very specific and targeted means. The book is at its best when narrating the maneuvers of both sides around certain deadlines, hearings and laws. For instance, Cape Wind's Jim Gordon finds himself racing to get approval to build a data tower, (a device which will gather specific information about the winds in the Nantucket waterway.) The opponents keep trying to throw up judicial and procedural roadblocks as Gordon himself tries to rally his own lobbying efforts. All the while, there is a sprint against the coming winter, and Gordon knows he must get construction started before the ocean gets too rough. In the climax, Cape Wind faces a mysterious alliance of forces in Washington. Alaska politicians are trying to get an amendment into a Coast Guard Bill; the amendment seems to be specifically designed to end the Cape Wind proposal once and for all. It is in instances like this

that the book is running on all cylinders and the intended thesis of the creators comes through loud and clear: Power is money and money is power. But rather than achieving a legislative version of A Civil Action, the authors let their passion about what they have seen get the best of them a little too often. Making fun of politicians and the rich is easy, (although it is fun sport,) and they make the most of it. But in the end it is at the expense of their story. But then again, what is the ending? The book kind of stops rather than ends, because there is still much more to happen in the alternative energy saga in this country. One thing the authors do effectively is narrate periods when New England power grids were almost in meltdowns. On hot and cold days they desperately needed more power. Data shows that the wind turbines would have been able to supply at least some more. Maybe a sequel -Cape Wind II - is in our future?

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