



## Disgraced 'Billionaire' Says He Faked His Way Onto the Rich Lists



The Wealth Advisor  
Contributor

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**(Daily Beast) - He called himself the "eccentric billionaire," and the global press largely went along with it. Then came more than \$80 million in court judgments for allegations ranging from harassment to sexual battery. Now Alki David, the 53-year-old heir to a Coca-Cola bottling fortune, is no longer having fun. And his persona, he says, is a fraud.**

"They've completely exhausted me of my cash resources," David told The Daily Beast—though he has yet to pay any of the damages. "Fortunately, I've got a great mother, God bless her, who's been very supportive of me."

David claims that dozens of international publications have been duped into falsely calling him a billionaire, from *The New York Times* to *Rolling Stone*, *The Hollywood Reporter*, *Los Angeles* magazine, and the British newspaper *The Sunday Times*, whose marquee rich list **pegs** his and his family's net worth at \$3.8 billion.

"These fucking idiots," David said. "They have nothing, nothing at all. There are no *billions*."

A spokesperson for *The Sunday Times* says that David's presence on the list is "no fiction," since they are accounting for his wider family's stake in the publicly traded Coca-Cola bottler.

But the discrepancy proves that David has lied at least once. Either he never had billions of dollars—of which there is some evidence—or he is lying now, perhaps to shield himself from additional lawsuits and signal that existing plaintiffs won't be able to collect.

The latter theory would make sense, too. David's growing legal tab includes four judgments of at least \$5 million, the biggest—for alleged harassment, battery, and sexual battery—clocking in at a staggering \$58 million.

Most recently, David's company lost a \$7 million wrongful termination suit earlier this month, after he allegedly fired an employee for raising safety concerns at a corporate event. (Sexual harassment claims were dropped just before trial.) Testimony in that case **was briefly derailed** when he was heard calling the opposing counsel a "fucktard."

David vehemently denies the allegations and has appealed, or plans to contest, three of the verdicts; one other appeal was dropped, but he has yet to pay the judgment. As for the "fucktard" comment, he says he was just expressing his "own civil human rights."

In David's view, and that of his allies, he is the victim of an overzealous #MeToo movement and of accusers who "colluded" to extort him. He thinks he is being preyed on for his perceived wealth, a theory he analogizes like this: "Just because I wear a short skirt and nice heels doesn't give you the right to rape me."

Whether or not he's a billionaire, David says he will never hand over the cash. "I wouldn't pay these fucking people a dime, over my dead body," he said. "It'll be appealed ad nauseam, it'll go to whatever fucking Supreme Court I need to go to."

And if he loses those appeals? "Then come and get me."

Born in Nigeria to a wealthy Greek family, David says he comes "from a long line of peasants and priests." His father was an executive at the family bottling business.

"My dad was a great guy, everything he touched turned to gold, it seemed," he said.

David went to private school in the U.K. As a teenager, he says, he was run over by a car in London, which fractured his skull in multiple places and put him in a coma for four days. He says it took nearly a decade to recover.

"When I get agitated, I tend to shout as a result of that accident," he said.

Dreaming of a career in the movies, David enrolled at the Royal College of Art before moving to Los Angeles in the 1990s. He inherited significant family money when he was 30.

Around that time, he says, he put on a freediving event in Greece to promote conservation, garnering global media attention. David learned that he loved the limelight. "I really got first-hand experience on how you can create media and how you can create reality," he said.

He decided to take things further. According to David, he teamed up with a public relations guru, Pete Bassett, a music industry veteran who David claims worked to plant a rumor about his vast wealth.

"He put me out as a billionaire who was going to buy a soccer team in England called Coventry, and that became huge news," David said.

(Reached by email, Bassett said he hasn't worked with David in about 15 years. "No idea what I would have to say that was relevant," he added.)

In December 2007, an article **appeared** in *The Guardian*, under the headline "Billionaire film actor comes to Coventry's rescue." It noted that David "personally is worth an estimated £4 [billion]," or more than \$10 billion today, converted and adjusted for inflation.

David claimed in the article that he expected to imminently strike a deal. But sure enough, he soon **announced** that upon further consideration, the club was actually “falling apart,” and he was no longer interested. (*The Guardian* declined to comment.)

Nonetheless, the next spring, *The Sunday Times* wrote an article that **also** used the £4 billion figure, in which David announced that he had a “couple of yachts to keep me distracted” and was supposedly building another 210-footer at a cost of £60 million (roughly \$154 million). There is no indication the yacht was ever built; David says it wasn't.

Just a month after that article came out, in April 2008, *The Sunday Times* **put** David and his family on their rich list at a “cautious” estimate of £1.5 billion.

He tried to make the *Forbes* list too. The magazine wrote **an online article** in 2010 calling him a “billionaire” and telling readers to “look out” for his potential debut on their World's Billionaires ranking.

In the end, David didn't make the cut. A reporter who previously worked on the rich list told *The Daily Beast* he didn't provide “nearly enough proof.”

But it didn't matter; the narrative was already set.

Now regarded as a billionaire, David set out to prove his eccentricity.

In 2010 he promised \$1 million to any person who streaked in front of President Obama with an advertisement for his video-streaming business, BattleCam, painted on their chest.

A man attempted the feat that fall and was arrested; he collected only part of the prize money since he was not within “eyesight and earshot of the president,” as required, David **announced** in a press release.

He continued to seek notoriety for that company and a similar startup, FilmOn, a TV streaming site. He recruited *The Jersey Shore*'s golden brown protagonist, Mike “The Situation” Sorrentino, for an **endorsement**, staged a taped **intervention** for comedian Andy Dick, and issued a **challenge** to Donald Trump: \$10 million if the future president agreed to shave his head and an eyebrow and let David advertise in Sharpie on his forehead.

The tastefulness bar was low. David tried to put on a celebrity “fight club” **featuring** George Zimmerman—who was charged and acquitted for killing the unarmed Black teenager Trayvon Martin in 2012—with bare knuckles and no rules. (He said he would donate the proceeds to charity, but the fight never happened.)

At least some of David's employees signed waivers informing them that they would be exposed to an outrageous, potentially offensive environment, according to court records.

But some workers later claimed he took things way too far.

In three separate cases, ex-employees accused David of egregious misconduct. At least one worker claimed that he showed her "2 Girls 1 Cup," a scat-fetish video depicting two women eating their own feces. David was also accused in court filings of performing the "'mangina,' in which he dropped his pants and underwear, tucked his penis between his legs, and waddled around the office."

"My brand is what it was at the time," David says, acknowledging the episodes. (He sent an unsolicited picture to the The Daily Beast depicting the "mangina" as well.)

From there the accusations grew darker: According to testimony and legal briefs filed with the court, David allegedly groped and simulated oral sex on one woman, fired another who wouldn't have sex with him, and choked a female employee.

He insists none of that is true and that the former employees decided to collude against him after learning about a sexual harassment settlement he had previously paid. The woman in that case, another former employee, had alleged that David physically attacked her. (He denies wrongdoing but says he paid her roughly \$700,000 to make the situation go away.)

Carl Dawson, FilmOn's former chief marketing officer, who says he oversaw one of the three accusers, sides with his old boss. "I think this whole situation is a matter of people taking advantage of him," he said.

Dawson says the company's programming included "risqué material" but that he did not witness unprofessional behavior, including the "mangina" episode or anything similar—though David admitted to that conduct. Dawson thinks David's outbursts in court helped turn one of the juries against him.

In the end, three juries found in the plaintiffs' favor. The initial verdicts, all awarded in 2019: \$11.1 million, \$5 million, and \$58.25 million.

David pins some of the blame on his accusers, whom he derides as "bitches."

"Because I don't employ these bitches I can call them whatever I want - in the same way I can call you bitch for glossing over my facts with your 'bias,'" he wrote in a WhatsApp message. He previously wrote, "If U [don't] think there is a massive miscarriage of justice you're a cunt?"

But most of his rage is reserved for their lawyers, Gloria Allred and her daughter, Lisa Bloom. "They falsify evidence lists, they falsify witness lists, they pay people to lie," David fumed. "It's very, very difficult to win a case when the case is loaded with perjury."

A hearing is scheduled for next month over one of David's appeals, at which point he is confident he will be vindicated. (A judge previously denied his motion for sanctions against Bloom.)

Bloom—who in 2017 was widely condemned, including by her own mother, for furtively **trying to discredit** Harvey Weinstein's accusers—said that "Mr. David's incoherent rants about 'criminal' attorneys conspiring against him were sanctioned multiple times by our judges for being unfounded and frivolous."

Allred called David "a loser who tries to blame others for his offensive and outrageous conduct, both inside and outside of the courtroom."

The courts so far have not bought his allegations either.

Those three verdicts represent just a fraction of David's legal clashes.

There was the infamous case, in 2019, when he was arrested in Saint Kitts with a **reported** 5,000 cannabis plants on his private plane.

In a subsequent **podcast** with Mike Tyson, with whom David launched a CBD partnership, David challenged the two-island nation's "old draconian British" approach to marijuana, which has resulted in high local incarceration rates.

He added that "natural medicine" has wide benefits that has "physically, atomically changed" his body: "I am now genetically better. The genetics in me, which are harmonized by my DNA frequencies, have changed because of the medicine."

Separately, a year after the arrest, the Securities and Exchange Commission **atomically changed** David's ability to serve as the director of a public company for five years, after finding that he misled investors in his hologram business. He was also ordered to pay a \$100,000 fine, but neither admitted nor denied the allegations.

[Previously, David was involved in unrelated litigation over a business dispute with Barry Diller, whose company IAC owns The Daily Beast.]

Other misconduct claims have concurrently played out. In 2019, a **jury deadlocked** in a sexual harassment case brought by another former employee. David represented himself in the case—which *Los Angeles* magazine **described** as "the Most Bizarre #MeToo Trial of the Year"—and won the support of eight out of 12 jurors.

Though it was a relatively positive outcome for him, David assailed the head juror, whom he said voted against him, as “a cross dresser man in drag who identified as a lady,” in statements to *The Daily Beast*. The relevance of that juror’s wardrobe is not clear, but David piled on, saying he found the “fake tranny...particularly funny.”

He is hardly in the clear, even after the mistrial. In addition to the other judgments, a former employee filed a Jane Doe lawsuit in Los Angeles last year, alleging that David created a culture of fear and impropriety, and that he “fancied himself to be a provocateur.” The accuser claimed that crass jokes eventually devolved into outright misconduct: that David masturbated in front of her and tried to make her participate, and that at a company event he took her into a dark room and “violently raped” her. He strongly denies those allegations, too.

David’s focus is now vengeance and attempting to restore his reputation. He’s still rich, even if not a billionaire, and is dispensing his wealth to that end.

One example: He says he owns a purported media website, Shockya News, which regularly pumps out flattering stories about him and his cannabis business. One headline **reads** “L.A. Times Calls Alki David Next Gen Donald Trump.”

“Could a political career be in David’s future?” muses the subheadline. (The comparison, not intended as a compliment, **came from** a short letter to the editor in *The Los Angeles Times*.)

There are no clear disclosures on the website about David’s involvement, but he shrugs that off. “I’ll use every possible way to break through woke bullshit to get my point across son,” he wrote in a message. “Are u even suggesting inappropriateness? Even fucking suggesting?”

His argument is that conventional journalists won’t give him a fair shake. “Probably about 70% of American media today is controlled by Beijing,” he said.

Presented with some evidence to the contrary, he grew frustrated, his voice rising to a yell: “You fucking guys, you sit there with your dicks in your hands being manipulated.”

So what next for Alki David? If you can ignore the rage, he projects an air of calm. “In the adversity of what I will call victimization,” he said, “I’ve definitely come out stronger in so many ways, and my relationships are so much more meaningful.”

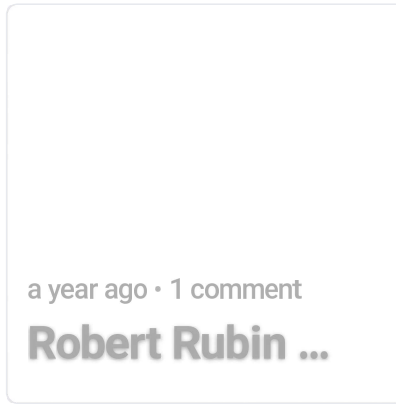
David is either a patsy or a serial predator, a billionaire or a fraud who can’t afford his own bad behavior. The courts have already delivered the first answer; his accusers may wait years to learn the second.

By **Noah Kirsch**  
**Wealth And Power Reporter**

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