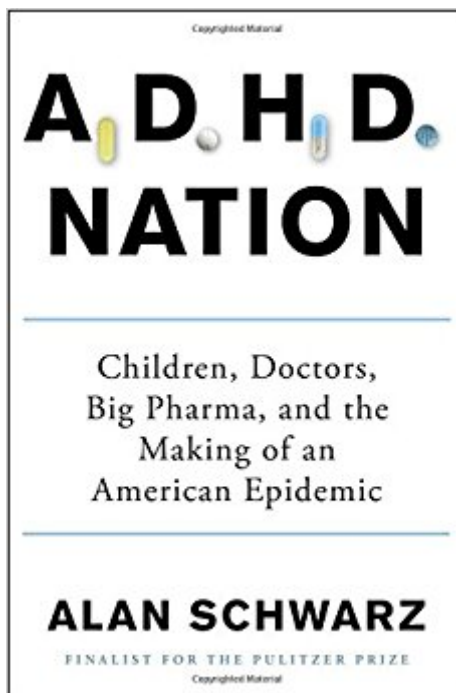




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# ADHD Nation: Children, Doctors, Big Pharma, And The Making Of An American Epidemic



## Synopsis

A Kirkus Reviews Best Nonfiction Book of the Year The groundbreaking and definitive account of the widespread misdiagnosis of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder—and how its unchecked growth over half a century has made ADHD one of the most controversial conditions in medicine, with serious effects on children, adults, and society. More than 1 in 7 American children get diagnosed with ADHD—three times what experts have said is appropriate—meaning that millions of kids are misdiagnosed and taking medications such as Adderall or Concerta for a psychiatric condition they probably do not have. The numbers rise every year. And still, many experts and drug companies deny any cause for concern. In fact, they say that adults and the rest of the world should embrace ADHD and that its medications will transform their lives. In ADHD Nation, Alan Schwarz examines the roots and the rise of this cultural and medical phenomenon: The father of ADHD, Dr. Keith Conners, spends fifty years advocating drugs like Ritalin before realizing his role in what he now calls “a national disaster of dangerous proportions”; a troubled young girl and a studious teenage boy get entangled in the growing ADHD machine and take medications that backfire horribly; and big Pharma egregiously over-promotes the disorder and earns billions from the mishandling of children (and now adults). While demonstrating that ADHD is real and can be medicated when appropriate, Schwarz sounds a long-overdue alarm and urges America to address this growing national health crisis.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"An illuminating exploration of ADHD, brimming with intelligence and insight. Schwarz reveals the powerful cultural and economic forces fueling its widespread diagnosis and drug treatment. Those with the disorder will hear a voice of compassion. And those who may be misdiagnosed, a clarion note of caution." —Jerome Groopman, M.D., Professor of Medicine, Harvard Medical School, staff writer, *New Yorker* —"ADHD Nation is a true rarity — a book that confronts an important subject with the authority of an expert, makes its case with the urgency of a red alert, and moves at the pace of a thriller." —Daniel Okrent, *New York Times* bestselling author of *Last Call* "In this powerful, necessary book, Schwarz exposes the dirty secrets of the growing ADHD epidemic." —Kirkus Reviews (starred review) "ADHD Nation" should be required reading for those who seek to understand how a field that once aimed to ameliorate the behavioral problems of children in a broad therapeutic context abdicated its mission to the stockholders of corporations like Shire and Lilly. Schwarz is sounding an alarm for a fire that looks nowhere near abating." —The *New York Times Book Review* "This eye-opening book should be a hit with drug-industry skeptics and worried parents who want to read a well-reported, definitive guide to this misunderstood and overly medicated disorder." —Booklist "Mr. Schwarz's disciplined focus gives his book clarity and even utility." —The *Wall Street Journal* "ADHD Nation is a necessary book. Schwarz has done a fine job on a maddening topic, and everyone who's interested in hyperactivity, attention spans, stimulants, and the current state of American health care should grab a copy." —*New York Magazine* "A dazzling piece of journalism, based on extensive research and an enormous number of interviews...an outstanding exposé." —*New Republic* "[Schwarz's] nimble investigation interweaves the narratives of pharmaceutical companies with those of child psychologist Keith Conners, who led ADHD's 'Manhattan Project', and young people grappling with the medical fallout. An intriguing sidelight is the misuse of ADHD drugs as performance enhancers." —*Nature*

Alan Schwarz is a former Pulitzer Prize-nominated investigative reporter for *The New York Times* whose acclaimed series of more than one hundred articles exposed the seriousness of concussions in the NFL and led to safety reforms for young athletes nationwide. His work was profiled in *The New Yorker* and honored with a George Polk Award, the Associated Press Sports Editors Award for Project Reporting (three times), and the 2013 Excellence in Statistical Reporting Award from the American Statistical Association. He and his family live in New York City.

I had high hopes for this book. I was convinced on reading a few reviews and knowing something of

the author's other work that this book would lead me to understand the history of ADHD, the heavy pushing of drug companies and how we got from there to here in this moment in time. The problem is that for most of this book, there is story after story after story (almost all short) of descriptions of kids and what they and their parents went through. These stories and the running dialog of doctors, drug companies, and court cases makes reading the whole book a challenge, at least for me. How many stories of kids, parents, doctors, drug companies, and court cases does it take to explain all of this? Not this many, trust me. After reading this book I was left with "and the answer is?". No answer came. I can really sum it all up by saying that drugs are a useful tool but with the warning that for many kids (and adults) there can be other tools available. Having said that, the other warning is that ALL drugs have side effects so use them if there is no other way of dealing with a real problem. There's the added complication of that "real problem" and how to tell if there really is a real problem. All kids come with problems - at least all the ones that I have ever known. Life is all about dealing with problems and learning what it takes to be happy. So how does one know when the problem is too big to ignore? That's step one and the book makes that very clear but I knew that without having to read story after story. A good writer (or a good editor) knows how to compile the multitudes of stories into just a few to illustrate the point without having to prove how much background work was done and how many interviews were conducted. Others may find this book just what they needed to help understand all of this. Others will find it way too much of a pretty good thing.

Interesting read. I knew a little about how ADHD med use was high, but I had no idea how pervasive a problem it has become. The author does a good job explaining the problem at a macro level, while using individual stories to drive it home. Anyone with kids should read this.

**EXCELLENT** An important book for any parent, professional or individual, who is dealing with the diagnosis and treatment of ADHD. It is also an insight into the manipulation of data by drug companies, who are focused on profits and not health. In simple terms, ADHD Nation is a must read in my opinion.

Objective and backed by evidence.

Perfect read for any parent or grandparent contemplating using drugs to treat ADHD

Well researched book that all parents and providers should read.

Awesome book! Very satisfied with the service provided by this seller!

Schwarz does an excellent job examining the important subject of the intersection of psychotropic drugs, a multi-billion dollar industry, and our most precious asset-children.

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