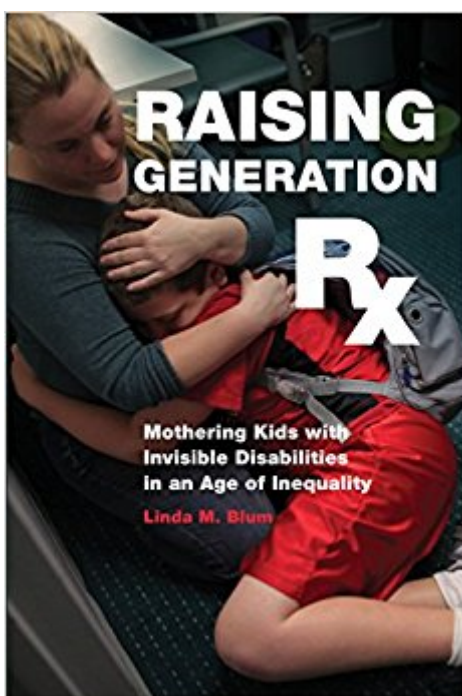


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# Raising Generation Rx: Mothering Kids With Invisible Disabilities In An Age Of Inequality



## Synopsis

Winner, *2016 Outstanding Publication in the Sociology of Disability*, American Sociological Association, Section Disability and Society

Recent years have seen an explosion in the number of children diagnosed with “invisible disabilities” such as ADHD, mood and conduct disorders, and high-functioning autism spectrum disorders. Whether they are viewed as biological problems in brain wiring or as results of the increasing medicalization of childhood, the burden of dealing with the day-to-day trials and complex medical and educational decisions falls almost entirely on mothers. Yet few ask how these mothers make sense of their children’s troubles, and to what extent they feel responsibility or blame.

*Raising Generation Rx* offers a groundbreaking study that situates mothers’ experiences within an age of neuroscientific breakthrough, a high-stakes knowledge-based economy, cutbacks in public services and decent jobs, and increased global competition and racialized class and gender inequality.

Through in-depth interviews, observations of parents’ meetings, and analyses of popular advice, Linda Blum examines the experiences of diverse mothers coping with the challenges of their children’s “invisible disabilities” in the face of daunting social, economic, and political realities. She reveals how mothers in widely varied households learn to advocate for their children in the dense bureaucracies of the educational and medical systems; wrestle with anguishing decisions about the use of psychoactive medications; and live with the inescapable blame and stigma in their communities.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

“This is a fascinating book, a must have. Her book is grounded in sociological feminist theories of motherhood. It also discusses different experiences of mothers depending on their marital status, social class, and race. This book will certainly be of interest not only to academics, policymakers and practitioners but to parents as well.”

**-Sociology of Health & Illness** “It is personal, written accessibly, and provides a substantive grounding in the political and health context it critiques. Placing the experiences of mothers and their children at the center of the issue around medicalization and disability shifts the debate and places lay experience at the core.”

**-Gender & Society** “Mother and feminist sociologist Blum takes a scholarly look at how ‘mother blame’ and financial difficulties add to the challenge of raising children with conditions such as ADHD, Asperger’s, and autism...Parents of children with disabilities that aren’t immediately obvious can benefit from reading about others in their shoes and from considering Blum’s take on this important public-health issue.”

**-Booklist** “A valuable contribution to the national dialogue on health care and education, told through the voices of the mothers whose children’s futures should be of concern to all of us.”

**-Kirkus** “Some 22 percent of American children today have some form of disability. In this highly important book, Linda Blum plunges us into the world of their worried mothers, deciphering labels and pills, fending off stigma, tirelessly advocating for their children. Married or alone, affluent or poor, such mothers often feel blamed and too rarely in the presence of real help. A carefully researched and deeply sensitive portrait of mothers on the Rx frontier.”

**-Arlie Hochschild, author of The Outsourced Self: Intimate Life in Market Times** “Raising children is hard. Raising children with ADHD, Asperger’s or autism is harder. Blending empathy and keen sociological analysis, Linda Blum shows how these mothers’ experiences vary by their socioeconomic status, marital status, race, and their child’s gender, albeit in complex and often ironic ways. Highly recommended!”

**-Abigail Saguy, author of What’s Wrong with Fat?** “In this detailed and insightful book, Linda Blum carefully and thoughtfully lifts the lid on the lives of 48 women who identify as mothers of children with ‘invisible’ disabilities.”

**-Disability and Society** “While we read regularly about the Ritalin phenomenon and ADD kids, Linda Blum helps us to understand all of this from the perspective of mothers raising ADD-diagnosed children. Blum brings several unique lenses to this field of research: her critical medical sociology framework, attention to race, class and gender, and an in-depth interview approach, which gets at the ‘complex ambivalences’ mothers (particularly those raising children of color) hold in relation to medicating and diagnosing their kids, and negotiating our contemporary risk culture. The

result is the complex, multi-dimensional analysis that we need to balance out an increasingly hegemonic neuroscience perspective."-Meika Loe,author of The Rise of Viagra: How the Little Blue Pill Changed Sex in America

Linda M. Blum is Professor of Sociology at Northeastern University. She is the author of *Between Feminism and Labor: The Significance of the Comparable Worth Movement*, *At the Breast: Ideologies of Breastfeeding and Motherhood in the Contemporary United States*, and *Raising Generation Rx: Mothering Kids with Invisible Disabilities in an Age of Inequality*.

Raising Generation RX is a wonderful book. As a mother of a child with invisible disabilities similar to those described in Blum's book, it was so refreshing to read the findings in this book. This book is extremely accessible and compelling and I couldn't recommend it more to anyone who is raising a child with emotional/behavioral issues. Blum's findings about the challenges that "vigilante" mothers must face in order to access much needed resources for vulnerable children are so important and have helped me so much! I am so lucky to have found this book!

this book rang painfully true. It was validating to know how universal my experience is, but also depressing. Good book, though.

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