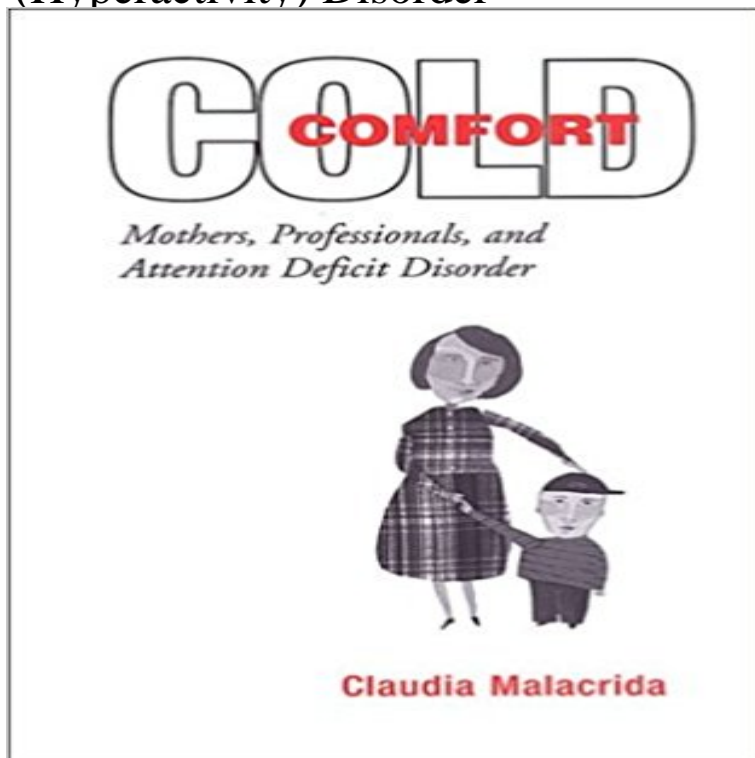


Cold Comfort: Mothers, Professionals, and Attention Deficit (Hyperactivity) Disorder



Mothers of children with Attention Deficit Disorder must inevitably make decisions regarding their children's diagnosis within a context of competing discourses about the nature of the disorder and the legitimacy of its treatment. They also make these decisions within an overriding climate of mother-blame. Claudia Malacrida's *Cold Comfort* provides a contextualized study of how mothers negotiate with/against the helping professions over assessment and treatment for their AD(H)D children. Malacrida counters current conceptions about mothers of AD(H)D children (namely that mothers irresponsibly push for Ritalin to manage their children's behaviour) as well as professional assumptions of maternal pathology. This thought-provoking examination documents Malacrida's extensive interviews with mothers of affected children in both Canada and the United Kingdom, and details the way in which these women speak of their experiences. Malacrida compares their narratives to national discourses and practices, placing the complex mother-child and mother-professional relations at the centre of her critical inquiry. Drawing on both poststructural discourse analysis and feminist standpoint theory, Malacrida makes a critical contribution to qualitative methodologies by developing a feminist discursive ethnography of the construction of AD(H)D in two divergent cultures. On a more personal level, she offers readers a moving, nuanced, and satisfying examination of real women and children facing both public and private challenges linked to AD(H)D.

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