

Kids & Ritalin

Pills a go-go (sections)

Diller "Running on Ritalin"

Video: ADHD

Class: "Running on Ritalin"

Write on

For class: a short article by Diller, "Running on Ritalin"

For section: series of short articles from *_Pills a go-go_*

Below is a series of discussion questions written by Charisse Massay. These are a great start for the online discussion. In addition to the article, please look online for
(1) websites about children & pharmaceuticals,
(2) discussion groups about ADHD pharmaceuticals (you can use google groups or look at different bulletin boards).

Post your responses to the questions below online (include web-links if appropriate).

Bring to section a paragraph or two describing the kinds of online interaction you found in the discussion groups. What surprised you? How do you make sense of it?

Discussion topic: Running on Ritalin

According to one doctor in the Diller article, 10% of children are afflicted with some variant of ADD, which translates to one in every six boys between the ages of five, and twelve should be treated for ADD. If this is the truth, then shouldn't the global consumption statistics be similar in other developed countries? According to multiple sources, America consumes 85% of the world's Ritalin, which denies the idea that the affliction is merely biological.

Diller states many social causes of this ADD epidemic such as increased demands on our children, parental inabilities to deal with hyperactive children and an increased medicated community, which does not seem to have issues with administering psychotropic drugs to our children.

What other social factors do you feel contribute to the Ritalin epidemic? Diller addresses three major parts of this transition but offers minimal social opinions for each section. Please discuss other ideas within these subjects (and more...):

Race: The primary use by white suburban middle class, what keeps inner city youth from using Ritalin?

Pressure: America's demand on its youth versus other nations (including media and social pressures)

Cosmetic Pharmacology: American's continuous shifting towards a medicated society wherein personality flaws are addressed by psychotropic drugs. Including American concepts of guilt and blame regarding personal distress.

How would you address a financially struggling family with a child with moderate signs of ADD? In our fast paced and ever faster populating American world, is Ritalin a necessary technology like cell phones and PDAs? If elementary school principals believe that it makes the experience of school easier for certain children, is it wrong to deny these kids the privilege of being a better student? Where do we draw the line between physical vs. mental performance enhancing drugs?