



With a Lot of Help from Our Friends: The Politics of Alcoholism

Nancy Olson

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This book tells the inside story of government attempts to deal with the American alcohol problem from 1970 to 1980, the most important decade in the history of alcohol legislation since Prohibition, with the famous Hughes Act as its centerpiece. We meet the friends and supporters of Harold Hughes, the charismatic senator and former governor from Iowa, and Marty Mann, the beloved "first lady of Alcoholics Anonymous." The author, herself a major participant in these events, describes the struggles and triumphs of this small band of recovered alcoholics and their friends as they bared their souls before congressional hearings and succeeded in convincing a Congress and three reluctant Presidents to support this effort. Nancy Olson offers us a unique behind-the-scenes view of the alcoholism legislation that changed America during the 1970s. Both those interested in alcoholism and those intrigued by the legislative process will find this book fascinating. Well-documented and clearly written, this book tells a story that has long needed telling. Ernest Kurtz, author of *Not-God: A History of Alcoholics Anonymous* Written in an engaging style, the book includes vivid accounts of incidents and exchanges, with a cast list including members of Congress and their staffs, federal administrators, scientists, and representatives of the alcoholism movement and of the alcohol industries. The book is essential reading for anyone interested in the modern development of thinking and action about alcoholism and alcohol issues in the U.S. Robin Room, Professor and Director of the Centre for Social Research on Alcohol and Drugs, Stockholm University, Sweden

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