



The End of Overeating: Taking Control of the Insatiable American Appetite

By David A. Kessler

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Dr. David A. Kessler, the dynamic and controversial former FDA commissioner known for his crusade against the tobacco industry, is taking on another business that's making Americans sick: the food industry. In *The End of Overeating*, Dr. Kessler shows us how our brain chemistry has been hijacked by the foods we most love to eat: those that contain stimulating combinations of fat, sugar, and salt.

Drawn from the latest brain science as well as interviews with top physicians and food industry insiders, *The End of Overeating* exposes the food industry's aggressive marketing tactics and reveals shocking facts about how we lost control over food—and what we can do to get it back. For the millions of people struggling with their weight as well as those of us who simply can't seem to eat our favorite foods in moderation, Dr. Kessler's cutting-edge investigation offers valuable insights and practical answers for America's largest-ever public health crisis. There has never been a more thorough, compelling, or in-depth analysis of why we eat the way we do.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Conditioned hypereating is a biological challenge, not a character flaw, says Kessler, former FDA commissioner under presidents Bush and Clinton). Here Kessler (*A Question of Intent*) describes how, since the 1980s, the food industry, in collusion with the advertising industry, and lifestyle changes have short-circuited the body's self-regulating mechanisms, leaving many at the mercy of reward-driven eating. Through the evidence of research, personal stories (including candid accounts of his own struggles) and examinations of specific foods produced by giant food corporations and restaurant chains, Kessler explains how the desire to eat—as distinct from eating itself—is stimulated in the brain by an almost infinite variety of diabolical combinations of salt, fat and sugar. Although not everyone succumbs, more people of all ages are being set up for a lifetime of food obsession due to the ever-present availability of foods laden with salt, fat and sugar. A gentle though urgent plea for reform, Kessler's book provides a simple food rehab program to fight back against the industry's relentless quest for profits while an entire country of people gain weight and get sick. According to Kessler, persistence is all that is needed to make the perceptual shifts and find new sources of rewards to regain control. (*May*)

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From [Booklist](#)

Kessler surveys the world of modern industrial food production and distribution as reflected in both restaurants and grocery stores. To his chagrin, he finds that the system foists on the American public foods overloaded with fats, sugars, and salt. Each of these elements, consumed in excess, has been linked to serious long-term health problems. Kessler examines iconic foods such as Cinnabon and Big Macs, all of which have skilled marketing machines promoting consumption. Such nutritionally unbalanced foods propel people who already tend to eat more than mere physical need might otherwise warrant into uncontrolled behavior patterns of irrational eating. These persistent psychological and sensory stimuli lead to what Kessler terms “conditioned hypereating,” which he believes is a disease rather than a failure of willpower. There is hope, however. Kessler identifies the cues that lead to overeating and offers some simple, practical tools to help control one’s impulses. --Mark Knoblauch

Review

“Dr. David Kessler has written a fascinating account of the science of human appetite, as well as its exploitation by the food industry. *The End of Overeating* is an invaluable contribution to the national conversation about the catastrophe that is the modern American diet.” ?*Michael Pollan, author of In Defense of Food*

“David A. Kessler, who led the battle against the tobacco industry, now joins the fight against obesity. His message is important: The problem is not only the behavior of profit-driven food companies, but also the daily choices that each one of us makes.” ?*Eric Schlosser, author of Fast Food Nation*

“David Kessler's fascinating book is essential for anyone interested in learning more about how corporate greed and human psychology have created a national health crisis. ” ?*Alice Waters, chef and owner of Chez Panisse*

“Disturbing, thought-provoking, and important.” ?*Anthony Bourdain, author of Kitchen Confidential*

“A compelling book about overeating and the obesity pandemic. Dr. Kessler thoroughly examines the nature of our relationship with food and why it is critical to understand and modify our behavior to reverse this global threat to health and well-being.” ?*David Satcher, former Surgeon General and director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*

“A fascinating, unique book by a brilliant public health leader.” ?*Donna Shalala, former Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services*

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