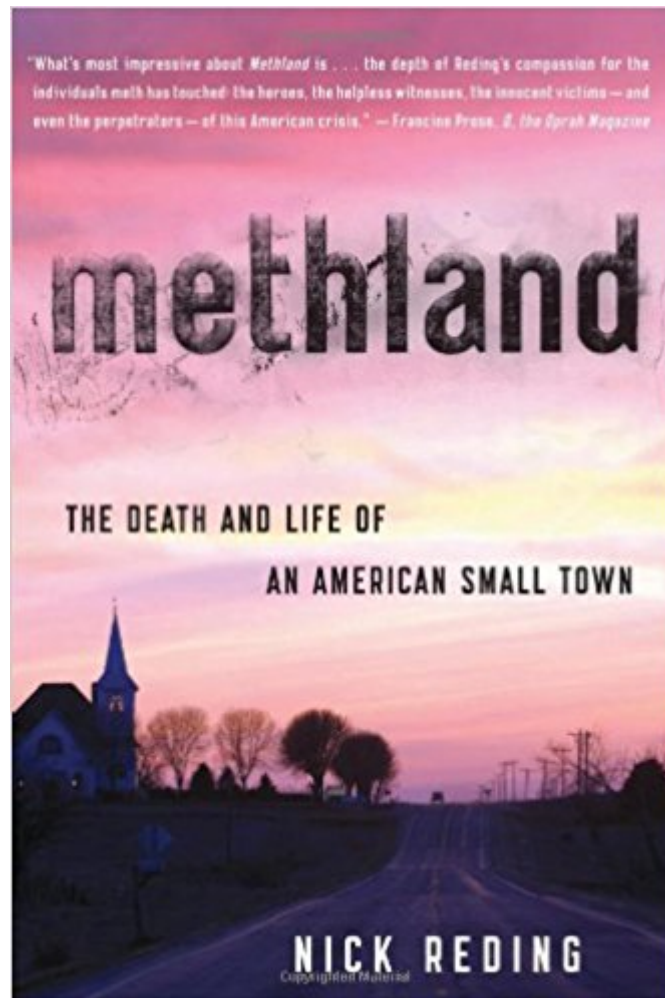




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# Methland: The Death And Life Of An American Small Town



## Synopsis

The bestselling book that launched meth back into the nation's consciousness. Based on Reding's four years of reporting in the agricultural town of Oelwein, Iowa, and tracing the connections to the global forces that set the stage for the meth epidemic, *Methland* offers a vital perspective on a contemporary tragedy. It is a portrait of a community under siege, of the lives that meth has devastated, and of the heroes who continue to fight the war.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Using what he calls a "live-in reporting strategy," Reding's chronicle of a small-town crystal meth epidemic-about "the death of a way of life as much as... about the birth of a drug"-revolves around tiny Oelwein, Iowa, a 6,000-resident farming town nearly destroyed by the one-two punch of Big Agriculture modernization and skyrocketing meth production. Reding's wide cast of characters includes a family doctor, the man "in the best possible position from which to observe the meth phenomenon

For this powerful, terrifying look at the drug epidemic in America's heartland, Reding studied meth production and addiction in Oelwein over four years. The book's strength lies in its character studies and depictions of destroyed families -- many not for the squeamish -- as well as in its explanation of how meth producers integrate their operations to become major conglomerates. Despite the persuasive narrative, a few reviewers noted a weakness in Reding's attempt to link larger

socioeconomic forces (such as the rise of agribusiness) to small towns' meth use and production. But the coupling of classic reporting and a compelling, timely story make *Methland* a book well worth reading. --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

When I think of rural America, I think of a tight knit family, small town life, and a more "traditional" way of living. I never realized that meth would play such a huge problem in many small towns. The sad reality surrounding the devastation that meth leaves in its wake is not tip toed around. You really gain an appreciation, at least on some level, of what life is like in the towns and lives meth is destroying. One part that struck me is when some of the people the author interviewed discuss how they struggle to experience happiness on the same level as when they were high. Meth lasts longer than just the acute phase of being high and even those who have been clean continue to struggle. It also tells the story of those not using meth and how their lives are destroyed. They often experience horrible consequences purely due to the choices of those around them. I left this book feeling something for everyone, including the meth users themselves. Yes, they made mistakes, but their struggles are real and most of them WANT to get better. The book is extremely well written and will keep your attention the whole way through. I had a hard time putting it down!

This is journalism at its best. "*Methland*" is about the methamphetamine attack on rural America. Focusing on Oelwein Iowa, it's about the ordinary people who use meth, and the ordinary people who make it & deal it. And the reasons why they do. Globalisation has meant that the old industries (the farming, the rail work & meat packing) are largely gone, or have been changed beyond recognition. Local unemployment is high. What work there is, being done by low paid immigrant labour. Then a drug turns up (in large quantities) that delivers instant pleasure and relief from depression; it's also the only well paying job around. Who can blame anyone for getting in to it? But then the consequences become apparent. ...the addictiveness, the violence, the hideous self-destruction, the neglected children. And behind the scenes, pulling the strings, is big business (agribusiness, the pharmaceutical industry and the Mexican drug cartels) intent on maximizing their profits, with no or little concern for the lives they're destroying. But "*Methland*" is much more than this; it's also about the people who fought back to reclaim their lives and their towns. It shows it can be done. Nick Reding has written an important book. On the subject of meth in rural America, also see the documentary "*Montana meth*" (HBO). On meth in the gay scene, see Todd Ahlberg's superb documentary "*Meth*" (Babalu Pictures)

Meth was given to our soldiers in WWII - don't stop keep fighting! Most disturbing and enlightening at the same time are the idiot congressmen, Senators, Federal committees, DEA, and FBI who start out gangbusters then report "the Meth problem in America is under control and give themselves all the credit. Yeoman, Hamas Terrorist groups are already in are getting into the meth game for weapon money. China and Africa bring truck loads across the Canadian border because their safe from USA laws. Then the spanning across America begins. CVS, WALMART, and many other drugs stores refuse to ban the over the counter drugs. Sure you sign your name then right behind you is a RUNNER paying the clerk more than a months salary for their inventory. Meth is everywhere, killing America slowly but surely. And if the terrorist get involved the free. Super Power wont know what hit them... And can't forget all the Allies of ours that think Obama is incapable in Foreign Policy. So do I!

Great read! Well written, enlightening, and quite interesting to read about what really happens in the human body, peoples lives, and communities when Meth takes over as it replaces good jobs and strong communities, with escapism.... fast cash to smalltime dealers... Should be read by everyone who wants to see positive changes and not just complain. Shouldn't be surprised when all the good local jobs, small farms, and basically the entire areas middle class disappeared, well something is going to fill that gap. I just did not realize how horribly and permanently Meth screws up peoples brains and their ability to just function as a normal member of society.

Excellent story about what happened in one small town in Iowa when the good, union wages and benefits were slashed as the plant was purchased by a mega company. People turned to meth to stay alert to work double shifts to support their families. It is a tragic tale of the death of the middle class in mid-America.

The fact that Mr. Reding faced quite a bit of blowback from Oelwein residents after his book was published is no surprise. I grew up in a small mill town where alcoholism was a way of life. Small communities always take great umbrage at being depicted in any negative light. This is based on an innate sense of insecurity. Some residents would rather stick their heads in the ground and pretend everything is hunky dory. This kind of attitude is childish and dangerous. Mr. Reding didn't set his eyes only on Oelwein but any rural communities who have been left behind because of globalization and harmful federal government inactions. He does an excellent job describing the history of methamphetamine, its effects of the body and what are the major contributors to its widespread use.

The author gives very vivid, chilling descriptions of how the drug attacks the body, mind and community. The main contributors to this epidemic are convincingly depicted as the big agricultural companies, big pharmaceutical companies and Mexican drug cartels. Mr. Reding hits the nail on the head by stressing that this is not solely an issue of individuals lacking willpower or morals. The book is a very human, clear-eyed view of a drug that continually permeates our rural nation and how politicians and most citizens refuse to acknowledge its far-reaching, horrible presence. An absolutely outstanding, highly readable and important book.

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