



# Manufacturing Depression: The Secret History of a Modern Disease

*Gary Greenberg*

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*Am I depressed or just unhappy?* In the last two decades, antidepressants have become staples of our medicine cabinets—doctors now write 120 million prescriptions annually, at a cost of more than 10 billion dollars. At the same time, depression rates have skyrocketed; twenty percent of Americans are now expected to suffer from it during their lives. Doctors, and drug companies, claim that this convergence is a public health triumph: the recognition and treatment of an under-diagnosed illness. Gary Greenberg, a practicing therapist and longtime depressive, raises a more disturbing possibility: that the disease has been manufactured to suit (and sell) the cure.

Greenberg draws on sources ranging from the Bible to current medical journals to show how the idea that unhappiness is an illness has been packaged and sold by brilliant scientists and shrewd marketing experts—and why it has been so successful. Part memoir, part intellectual history, part exposé—including a vivid chronicle of his participation in a clinical antidepressant trial—*Manufacturing Depression* is an incisive look at an epidemic that has changed the way we have come to think of ourselves.

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