

**\*\*Psychiatrist reveals how his profession has gone off the rails in UNHINGED\*\***

Publication Date: May 18, 2010

Psychiatrist Daniel J. Carlat, MD believes that his profession has lost sight of its true mission—to heal mental illness. In **UNHINGED: The Trouble with Psychiatry—A Doctor’s Revelations about a Profession in Crisis** (Free Press; May 18, 2010; \$25.00) he reveals from the insider’s view a host of deeply troubling truths that the public must know about, such as: That psychiatrists barely understand how the medications they prescribe work; they are prescribing to millions of children extremely powerful anti-psychotic drugs that were once reserved only for the most profound cases of mental illness, such as schizophrenia; and certain illnesses are so over-diagnosed that the reported rate of bipolar disorder in children has increased by *8,000 percent* in just nine years.

For the last 15 years, Dr. Carlat has practiced psychiatry in a solo practice in a small town north of Boston. Also on the faculty of Tufts Medical School, he did his psychiatric training at Harvard Medical School and Massachusetts General Hospital, and he edits *The Carlat Psychiatry Report*, a respected monthly newsletter that is read by thousands of psychiatrists across the country. His article for *The New York Times Magazine*, “Dr. Drug Rep” – a strikingly honest account of how he fell under the sway of a drug company’s all too compelling marketing pitch as a paid speaker and later quit – was selected for the *Best Science Writing 2008* anthology.

In **UNHINGED** he pulls no punches in taking readers behind the scenes to show the many ways in which drug money has corrupted and degraded his profession. These days, most psychiatrists don’t do psychotherapy. The allure of the money they make from doing “15-minute med checks” is too strong, allowing them to see many more patients than hour-long sessions, so they have lost the ability to understand their patients as people. Instead they medicate symptoms with powerful drugs that in many cases cause side effects more dangerous than the problems being treated.

In an interview for **UNHINGED**, Dr. Carlat can discuss:

- Why psychiatrists are sometimes considered the “ugly ducklings” of medicine
- His own personal experiences as a paid drug rep
- The “ideal psychiatrist” and the attributes that such a professional would possess
- How marketing has more of an impact than research findings on our overall impressions of medications, especially with psychiatric drugs
- How studies conducted by pharmaceutical companies can render unbiased and unreliable results
- The strengths and weaknesses of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM)
- What we really know about how psycho-pharmaceuticals work and their side effects
- The truth behind statistics supposedly showing that the rates of mental illness have skyrocketed
- Prescription data-mining, the practice whereby pharmaceutical companies can purchase doctors’ prescribing data from local pharmacies
- How and why the psychiatric establishment is ignoring the critical shortage of mental health clinicians in the U.S.

-OVER-

Carlat tells the personal story of how his own mother’s tragic suicide motivated him to become a

psychiatrist. But he goes on to paint a riveting portrait of a profession in decline. He opens the door to the psychiatrist's office, detailing how he and his colleagues think about their patients and how they decide which medications to prescribe. In fascinating and understandable prose, he describes exactly what we know about the causes and treatment of mental disorders such as depression and anxiety. As Carlat bluntly puts it, "The shocking truth is that psychiatry has yet to develop a convincing explanation for the pathophysiology of any illness at all." So little is known about the underlying neurobiology of these diseases that treatments are often a series of trials and errors, swapping medications or dosages and seeing what works. Instead of engaging patients in talk therapy, which is often time consuming, psychiatrists now prefer prescribing medications, which are the more lucrative options. And all of these new drugs on the pharmaceutical market? Most of them are no more effective than the prototypes that were created 50 years ago.

Using real cases of patients from his own practice and those of psychiatrists he knows, in **UNHINGED** Dr. Carlat brings these problems vividly to life as they affect peoples' lives, showing how modern psychiatry subjects them to substandard care. Patients suffer a host of negative side effects, become labeled with "diseases" that may not have, and most tragically, are being deprived of integrative treatment that combines the right medication with the right therapy. This has to stop—and it can. Throughout the book, Dr. Carlat provides empowering advice for prospective patients, describing the kinds of treatments that work, and those that should be avoided. In the final chapter, he provides a powerful prescription for how to get psychiatry back on track.

Dr. Daniel Carlat is on the faculty of Tufts Medical School, and did his psychiatric training at Harvard Medical School and Massachusetts General Hospital, where he was chief resident of the inpatient psychiatric unit. He has published several professional books and articles, and is currently the editor-in-chief of *The Carlat Psychiatry Report*, a monthly newsletter read by clinicians throughout the U.S. He is also an occasional contributor to the *New York Times*, where he has published articles on psychiatric and medical topics.

We hope you will consider a feature or review of **UNHINGED**. If you would like to interview author Daniel Carlat, please contact me at [Andrew.Dodds@simonandschuster.com](mailto:Andrew.Dodds@simonandschuster.com) or call (212) 698-7144.

Best,

Andy Dodds

**About the Book:**

**UNHINGED**

**The Trouble with Psychiatry—A Doctor's Revelations about a Profession in Crisis**

By Daniel J. Carlat, MD

Free Press Hardcover

Publication Date: May 18, 2010

ISBN-10: 1-4165-9079-X

ISBN-13: 978-1-4165-9079-8

Price: \$25.00; 272 Pages