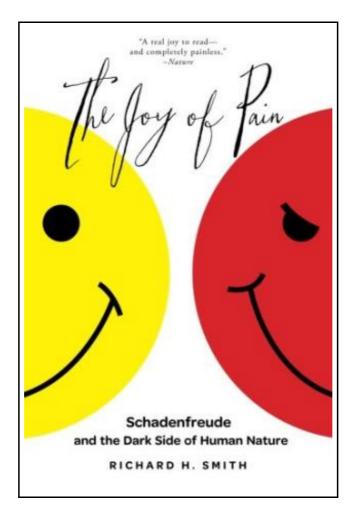
The Joy of Pain: Schadenfreude and the Dark Side of Human Nature



Filesize: 2.37 MB

Reviews

This ebook is very gripping and fascinating. Sure, it is engage in, nevertheless an amazing and interesting literature. It is extremely difficult to leave it before concluding, once you begin to read the book.

(Ms. Ora Buckridge)

THE JOY OF PAIN: SCHADENFREUDE AND THE DARK SIDE OF HUMAN NATURE



Oxford University Press. Paperback. Book Condition: New. Paperback. 256 pages. Dimensions: 9.1in. x 6.1in. x 0.8in.Few people will easily admit to taking pleasure in the misfortunes of others. But who doesnt enjoy it when an arrogant but untalented contestant is humiliated on American Idol, or when the embarrassing vice of a selfrighteous politician is exposed, or even when an envied friend suffers a small setback The truth is that joy in someone elses pain--known by the German word schadenfreude--permeates our society. In The Joy of Pain, psychologist Richard Smith, one of the worlds foremost authorities on envy and shame, sheds much light on a feeling we dare not admit. Smith argues that schadenfreude is a natural human emotion, one worth taking a closer look at, as it reveals much about who we are as human beings. We have a passion for justice. Sometimes, schadenfreude can feel like getting ones revenge, when the suffering person has previously harmed us. But most of us are also motivated to feel good about ourselves, Smith notes, and look for ways to maintain a positive sense of self. One common way to do this is to compare ourselves to others and find areas where we are better. Similarly, the downfall of others--especially when they have seemed superior to us--can lead to a boost in our self-esteem, a lessening of feelings of inferiority. This is often at the root of schadenfreude. As the author points out, most instances of schadenfreude are harmless, on par with the pleasures of light gossip. Yet we must also be mindful that envy can motivate, without full awareness, the engineering of the misfortune we delight in. And envy-induced aggression can take us into dark territory indeed, as Smith shows as he examines the role of envy and schadenfreude in the Nazi...



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