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When Bad Things Happen to Other People

Von John Portmann

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Produktinformation -Verkaufsrang: #1677277 in eBooksVerffentlicht am: 2002-06-01Erscheinungsdatum: 2002-06-01File Name: B000FBFGAI | File size: 48.Mb

Von John Portmann : When Bad Things Happen to Other People before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised When Bad Things Happen to Other People:

KundenrezensionenHilfreichste Kundenrezensionen0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. entertaining and provocativeVon Ein KundeWhy do we (sometimes) delight in the suffering of our fellow humans? Should we fell ashamed of schadenfreude and other "outlaw emotions," as the author calls them? John Portmann has produced an elegant and readable meditation on the significance of the pleasure we take in the spectacle afforded by the misfortunes of others. Portmann carefully distinguishes schadenfreude from garden variety malice in the course of his examination of what great philosophers and the world's major religions have to tell us about the subject. Throughout the book, the author comes across as brilliant and compassionate, but never dull or stuffy, even when he argues (in the conclusion) that the satisfactions of mercy can be every bit as great as those of revenge. When Bad

Things Happen to Other People is an important contribution to the growing literature on human emotions.0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. When good books are written by other peopleVon Ein KundeAs a law professor, I thought I knew everything about schadenfreude, but then I read John Portmann's fascinating book, and it made me think about the terrible things that happen to people who deserve to have even worse things happen to them in a completely new light. Why is it that we feel such satisfaction at the misfortunes of others? Portmann explains, in a wonderfully lucid and elegant style, the differences among the various senses in which we view the bad things that might happen, ranging from comedy through true tragedy. This book is a real crossover between scholarship and a delightful read.

KurzbeschreibungAlthough many of us deny it, it is not uncommon to feel pleasure over the suffering of others, particularly when we feel that suffering has been deserved. The German word for this concept-Schadenfreude-has become universal in its expression of this feeling. Drawing on the teachings of history's most prominent philosophers, John Portmann explores the concept of Schadenfreude in this rigorous, comprehensive, and absorbing study.From BooklistDoes taking pleasure in the pain of another always represent malice? Or can this emotion reflect a thoughtful respect for justice? And what about humor, which often revolves around a "comeuppance" that those who laugh see as trivial (though the laughter's target may disagree)? These are the sorts of questions Portmann takes on in his nuanced analysis of schadenfreude. The subject has been debated by philosophers over the generations; Portmann engages with them, from Kant and Freud to Nietzsche and Schopenhauer. He draws on literature, too, exploring the positions of Kafka and Dickens, Umberto Eco and Toni Morrison, and applies his normative notion of schadenfreude to current debates on subjects such as capital punishment, media violence, and the cult of celebrity. Portmann defends schadenfreude but urges attention to its basis in "power structures and social forces through which our characters both take shape and shape the lives of those around us." A demanding but productively provocative analysis. Mary CarrollPressestimmen." . . . raises many questions about the nature of suffering, the character of pleasure and the meanings of their continuing association -- an extraordinarily rich subject."-The New York Times ..."a valuable addition to moral philosophy because it points up some of the conundrums associated with a careful consideration of "Schadenfreude."-"Philosophy and Literature ..."strongly recommended as a stimulating and perceptive examination of issues and questions relating to our attitudes toward the misfortunes of other people with which all of us are familiar in our moral lives."-"The Virginia Quarterly "Lucid and engaging."-"The Wall Street Journal "A demanding but productively provocative analysis."-"Booklist