



The Fear of Sinking: The American Success Formula in the Gilded Age

By Paulette D Kilmer

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Editorial Review

From the Back Cover

Throughout American history, the obsession with success has been a persistent and pervasive theme. It is an obsession that has shaped all arenas of life, and at its heart lies a profound discontent: the fear of "sinking", of failing to do better than someone else, particularly one's parents or siblings. In this provocative study, Paulette D. Kilmer examines the ways in which the national preoccupation with success and its attendant anxieties have been manifested in popular culture. Her focus is on the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries - an era in which industrial growth and urbanization wrought enormous changes in the country. Faced with the insecurities and dislocations caused by this social transformation, Kilmer shows, millions of Americans sought reassurance and inspiration in the popular press. Through a variety of genres - including news accounts, dime novels, romances, mysteries, religious epics, children's books, and domestic fantasies - the burgeoning publishing industry fed a seemingly insatiable public appetite for stories of success. Analyzing contemporary newspapers and more than forty representative works from the period, Kilmer shows how retellings of the Cinderella story, which embodied the "rags-to-riches" paradigm, permeated all of the popular genres and not just the famous Horatio Alger serials. The formula plots used in these genres, she argues, derived from an earlier oral tradition. Readily adapted to the form of the novel and updated with references to current events, these tales proposed to teach their readers how to balance spiritual and worldly well-being.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Richard Simpson:

The book *The Fear of Sinking: The American Success Formula in the Gilded Age* has a lot of knowledge on it. So when you read this book you can get a lot of help. The book was authored by the very famous author. Tom makes some research prior to write this book. This particular book very easy to read you can find the point easily after looking over this book.

Ann Yoho:

People live in this new day of lifestyle always attempt to and must have the spare time or they will get lots of stress from both daily life and work. So , whenever we ask do people have spare time, we will say absolutely sure. People is human not really a robot. Then we inquire again, what kind of activity have you got when the spare time coming to anyone of course your answer will certainly unlimited right. Then ever try this one, reading ebooks. It can be your alternative in spending your spare time, often the book you have read is usually *The Fear of Sinking: The American Success Formula in the Gilded Age*.

John Rivera:

The Fear of Sinking: The American Success Formula in the Gilded Age can be one of your basic books that

are good idea. Most of us recommend that straight away because this publication has good vocabulary that will increase your knowledge in words, easy to understand, bit entertaining but nonetheless delivering the information. The writer giving his/her effort to place every word into pleasure arrangement in writing The Fear of Sinking: The American Success Formula in the Gilded Age although doesn't forget the main position, giving the reader the hottest as well as based confirm resource facts that maybe you can be one of it. This great information can easily drawn you into brand-new stage of crucial contemplating.

Carmen Dana:

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