

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910461621203321
Autore	Stearns Peter N
Titolo	Satisfaction not guaranteed [[electronic resource]] : dilemmas of progress in modern society // Peter N. Stearns
Pubbl/distr/stampa	New York, : New York University Press, c2012
ISBN	0-8147-8363-5 0-8147-8855-6
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (281 p.)
Disciplina	909.83
Soggetti	Civilization, Modern - 21st century Progress Electronic books.
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Note generali	Description based upon print version of record.
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references and index.
Nota di contenuto	Introduction: being cheerful and modern -- The gap: happiness scales and the edge of sadness -- Component parts: modernity and ideas of happiness and progress as historical forces -- Modernity's deficiencies -- False starts and surprises: making modernity more difficult -- The dilemmas of work in modernity -- Death as a modern quandary -- Century of the child? Childhood, parenting, and modernity -- Born to shop: consumerism as the modern panacea.
Sommario/riassunto	In the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, modern urban, industrial, affluent societies have made great strides towards fixing some of the problems that plagued other societies for centuries: food shortages are nearly eliminated, infant and maternal mortality has fallen dramatically, birth control is both readily available and effective, education levels are higher, and internal violence is significantly reduced. Modernity's blessings are many and bountiful—but has modernity really made us happy? Satisfaction Not Guaranteed is a book about the modern condition, and why the gains of living in modern urban, industrial, affluent societies have not proved more satisfying than they have. It examines why real results that paralleled earlier anticipations of progress have not generated the ease and contentment that the same forecasters assumed would apply to modern life. Employing his

trademark inquiry of emotions in American history, Peter N. Stearns asks why, if modern life has been generally characterized by measurable themes of progress, abundance, and improvement, are people not happier or more content with their lot in life? Why is there an increased incidence of psychological depression, anxiety, and the sense that no one has ever reached a pinnacle of happiness or contentment? It's not so much that modernity went wrong, but rather that it has not gone as swimmingly as was anticipated. Satisfaction Not Guaranteed uses concrete examples from both history and the present, such as happiness surveys, to discuss how as a society we might better juggle the demands of modern life with the pursuit of happiness.

2. Record Nr.

UNINA9910317790903321

Titolo

Peat / / edited by Bulent Topcuoglu, Metin Turan

Pubbl/distr/stampa

London, England : , : IntechOpen, , [2018]

©2018

ISBN

1-83881-395-0

1-78923-747-5

Descrizione fisica

1 online resource (x, 164 pages) : illustrations, maps

Disciplina

574.526325

Soggetti

Peat bogs

Lingua di pubblicazione

Inglese

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Materiale a stampa

Livello bibliografico

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Nota di bibliografia

Includes bibliographical references.