The Social Anxieties of Progressive Reform: Atlantic City, 1854-1920 (Paperback)

By Martin Paulsson

New York University Press, United States, 1996. Paperback. Condition: New. Revised ed.. Language: English . Brand New Book ***** Print on Demand *****. Tracing the evolution of Atlantic City from a miserable hamlet of fishermen s huts in 1854 to the nation s premier seaside resort in 1910, The Social Anxieties of Progressive Reform chronicles a bizarre political conflict that reaches to the very heart of Progressivism. Operating outside of the traditional constraints of family, church, and community, commercial recreation touched the rawest nerves of the reform impulse. The sight of young men and women frolicking in the surf and tangoing on the beach and the presence of unescorted women in boardwalk cafs and cabarets translated for many Progressives, secular and evangelical alike, into a wholesale rejection of socio-sexual restraints and portended disaster for the American family. While some viewed Atlantic City as a modern-day Sodom and Gomorrah, others considered the resort the triumph of American democracy and a healthy and innocent release from the drudgery and regimentation of industrial society. These conflicting currents resulted in a policy of strategic censorship that evolved in stages during the formative years of the city. Sunday drinking, gambling, and prostitution were permitted, albeit...

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