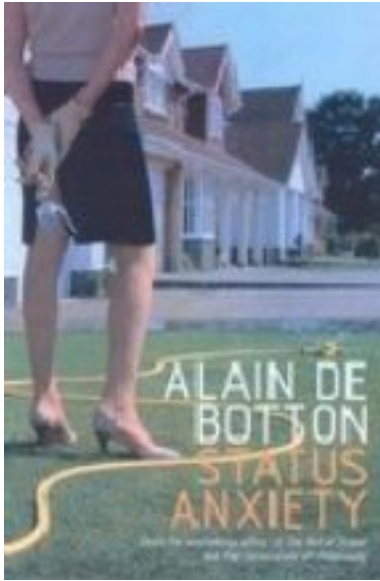


# STATUS ANXIETY



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'Every adult life could be said to be defined by two great love stories. The first ? the story of our quest for sexual love ? is well known and well-charted. The second ? the story of our quest for love from the world ? is a more secret and shameful tale. And yet this second love story is no less intense than the first.? This is a book about an almost universal anxiety that rarely gets mentioned directly: an anxiety about what others think of us; about whether we're judged a success or a failure, a winner or a loser.

This is a book about status anxiety. Alain de Botton, bestselling author of *The Consolations of Philosophy* and *The Art of Travel*, asks where worries about our status come from and what if anything we can do to surmount them. With the help of philosophers, artists and writers, he examines the origins of status anxiety ? ranging from the consequences of the French Revolution to our secret dismay at the success of our friends ? before revealing ingenious ways in which people have learnt to overcome their worries in their search for happiness. We learn about sandal-less philosophers and topless bohemians, about the benefits of putting skulls on our sideboards and of looking at ruins.