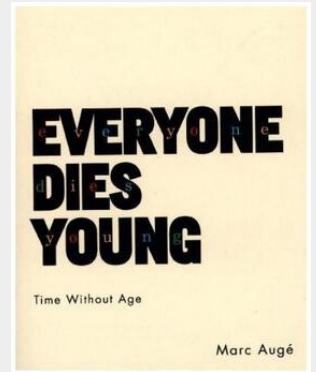


Augé

Everyone Dies Young

We are awash in time, savoring a few moments of it; we project ourselves into it, reinvent it, play with it; we take our time or let it slip away: it is the raw material of our imagination. Age, on the other hand, is the detailed account of the days that pass, the one-way view of the years whose total sum when set forth can stupefy us. Age wedges each of us between a date of birth that, at least in the West, we know for certain and an expiration date that, as a general rule, we would like to defer. Time is a freedom, age a constraint. Marc Augé remembers his beloved childhood cat, who seemed to grow wise with age, though her essential nature remained unchanged. He considers our belief that objects mature, when it is our perception of them that evolves over time. He wonders why public demonstrations of affection between the elderly make the young so uncomfortable and why we torture ourselves with regret at what might have been. Time can be liberating, he finds; it is a resource we can squander or relish. Yet age is a burden, bound up in our personal and cultural neuroses. With an ethnologist's understanding of construct and practice, Augé proves age is unrelated to the development of consciousness, desire, and representations of the self. In bold, eye-opening strokes, he isolates age as a physical marker and casts one's youthful approach to the world as the true measure of life's value.



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