



A Philosophy of Boredom

Lars Svendsen

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Although boredom is something that we have all suffered from at some point in our lives, and has become one of the central preoccupations of our age, very few of us can explain precisely what it is. In this book Lars Svendsen examines the nature of boredom, how it originated, its history, how and why it afflicts us, and why we cannot seem to overcome it by any act of will. A diverse and vague phenomenon, described as anything from 'tame longing without any particular object' (Schopenhauer), 'a bestial and indefinable affliction' (Dostoevsky), to 'time's invasion of your world system' (Joseph Brodsky), boredom allows many interpretations. In exploring these, Lars Svendsen brings together observations from philosophy, literature, psychology, theology and popular culture, examining boredom's pre-Romantic manifestations in medieval torpor, philosophies of the subject from Pascal to Nietzsche, and modern related concepts of alienation and transgression, taking in texts by Samuel Beckett, J. G. Ballard, Andy Warhol and many others. A witty and entertaining account that considers a serious issue, it will appeal to anyone who has ever felt bored, and wanted to know why.



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