Light in the Dark Room

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When we look at a photograph we see a moment that is no more. Photographs place reality into the past tense, representing not memory but memory's loss. They are not conduits for the return of memory, but "memento mori: reminders of the fact of death itself. And it is in this, Jay Prosser tells us, that we find the gift of photography. Engaging the photographic reflections of figures as different as Roland Barthes and Claude Levi-Strauss, Gordon Parks and Elizabeth Bishop, "Light in the Dark Room offers a vision of photography as realization of loss--and a revelation of how photographs can shed light on the dark rooms of our lives. Beginning with an analysis of Roland Barthes's "Camera Lucida, Prosser explores the relationship of autobiography and photography and then considers Levi-Strauss's last published book, his photographic memoir; he uncovers the collection of photography painstakingly assembled by poet Elizabeth Bishop but never published; and he recounts the story of a forgotten Brazilian boy from the 1960s who lost his home as a result of photographs. The losses this book recalls are poignant yet universal--a son loses his mother; an anthropologist, his culture; a photographer, his youth; a poet, her lover. Among these personal and moving losses and the remarkable photographs that accompany them, Prosser weaves his own meditations on photography, on the interdependence of loss and enlightenment, on the emergence of our technologized society--and the world we have lost in the process.

作者介绍:

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