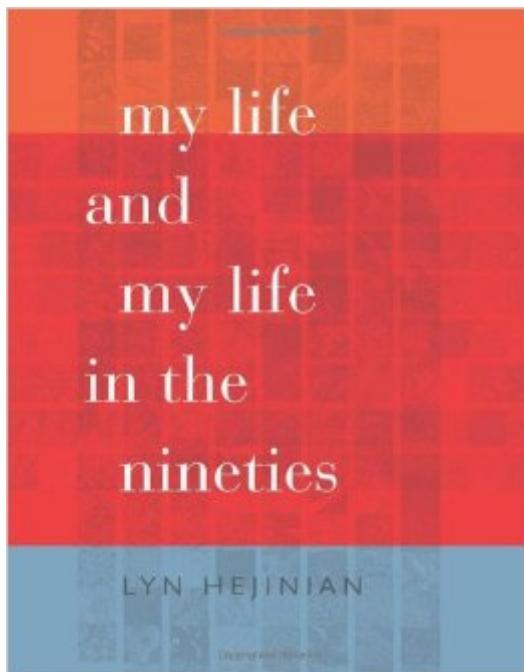


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My Life And My Life In The Nineties (Wesleyan Poetry Series)



Synopsis

Lyn Hejinian is among the most prominent of contemporary American poets. Her poem *My Life* has garnered accolades and fans inside and outside academia. First published in 1980, and revised in 1987 and 2002, *My Life* is now firmly established in the postmodern canon. This Wesleyan edition includes the 45-part prose poem sequence along with a closely related ten-part work titled *My Life in the Nineties*. An experimental intervention into the autobiographical genre, *My Life* explores the many ways in which language—“the things people say and the ways they say them”—shapes not only their identity, but also the very world around them.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This poet, Lyn Hejinian, is perhaps as great if not greater than Robert Hass or Louise Gluck. She is a literary gymnast. I felt the words and references, syntax and grammar, tumble in my mind like clouds. She moves in and out, but then don't we also as we drift? She talks about desire or need, for example, and a metaphor such as water is by her associated with thirst, then she talks about a woman laying in bed, perhaps it is she, who pretends to be a baby or wounded. She is both sad and thirsty. There is a "fellow in the dark" and he would be good, not with a harmonica, per se, but a good person. He was talking about oil paint, the body of pigments, and the ground with its distortions as they actually are, as you would see them. This is her portrait-bowl. Things seem to relate, a portrait-bowl comes after a man talking about paints and the ground with distortions and the first thing is to make an ashtray. It is about the past. Things seem disconnected. But the effect is

to lock in a mood with a series of profundities, little thoughts, memories emblematic of beauty in space-time. She points, as if directing us to cathartic moments. Here is a sample of what she does: "Sadness and thirst, and hence sadness and water, have ever since been associated in my imagination. She lay in bed pretending to be a baby or a wounded soldier. The fellow in the dark would be the good guy with a harmonica. He was talking about oil paints, the body of the pigments, and the ground, with its distortions as they're actual, really seen." She rhymes and splits, describing the nuances of moments that lead to other moments.

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