



My Life in Seventeen Books: A Literary Memoir

Jon M. Sweeney

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Jon M. Sweeney's charming memoir addresses meaningful books that he read at pivotal points in his life.

As a seasoned bookseller and publisher, Sweeney knows that the value of a good book goes well beyond its pages. Each chapter of his memoir centers a specific title and comments on the meaning that the book holds for Sweeney. He read Martin Buber while his marriage failed; he read ghost stories as his children left for college. These reflections are interspersed with quotations from the works and thoughtful historical information about the author and book, resulting in depth.

The books commented on represent Sweeney's personal trove, and many are by white men. Through their works, Sweeney touches on his own life in broad strokes; still, he's more focused on the books themselves, and on showing how they enriched his life, throughout. Books remained his constant companion through every struggle and experience; sometimes, they were like therapists, proffering unexpected advice when he felt at his lowest.

My Life in Seventeen Books is a memoir that's rich in book culture, celebrating familiar titles alongside esoteric philosophical and ecological ones.

CHLOE CLARK (May / June 2024)

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