



# American Lives

A Reader

Edited by Alicia Christensen

Introduction by Tobias Wolff

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## Book Synopsis:

Memoirs are as varied as human emotion and experience, and those published in the distinguished American Lives Series run the gamut. Excerpted from this series (called “splendid” by *Newsweek*) and collected here for the first time, these dispatches from American lives take us from China during the Cultural Revolution to the streets of New York in the sixties to a cabin in the backwoods of Idaho.

AMERICAN LIVES SERIES

## Included in this Press Kit:

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## Book Description

Memoirs are as varied as human emotion and experience, and those published in the distinguished American Lives Series run the gamut. Excerpted from this series (called “splendid” by *Newsweek*) and collected here for the first time, these dispatches from American lives take us from China during the Cultural Revolution to the streets of New York in the sixties to a cabin in the backwoods of Idaho.

In prose as diverse as the stories they tell, writers such as Floyd Skloot, Ted Kooser, Peggy Shumaker, and Lee Martin, among many others, open windows to their own ordinary and extraordinary experiences. John Skoyles tells how, for his Uncle Fred, a particular “Hard Luck Suit” imparted misfortune. Brenda Serotte describes a Turkish grandmother who made her living reading palms, interpreting cups, and prescribing poultices for the community. In “Son of Mr. Green Jeans,” Dinty W. Moore views fatherhood through the lens of pop culture. Janet Sternburg’s *Phantom Limb* muses on the dilemmas of a child caring for a parent. Whether evoking moments of death or disease, in family or marriage, history, politics, religion, or culture, these glimpses into singular American lives come together in a richly textured, colorful patchwork quilt of American life.

## Praise for the Books Featured in American Lives

“You will see [the] quality of recognizable humanity glittering throughout the memoirs from which this book was drawn. . . . These writers are intensely interested in what lies beyond them—how the world at large acts, and acts on them, and, finally, hesitantly, how they themselves have acted upon the world. This is, after all, history—history from the inside out.”—from Tobias Wolff’s introduction

## Post-Publication Praise

Please visit this book’s [Web page](http://www.nebraskapress.unl.edu/product/American-Lives,674197.aspx) (<http://www.nebraskapress.unl.edu/product/American-Lives,674197.aspx>) for the most current post-publication praise.

## Author Biography

**Alicia Christensen** is the Bison Books editor at the University of Nebraska Press. **Tobias Wolff** is the author of numerous books, including the memoirs *This Boy's Life* and *In Pharaoh's Army: Memories of the Lost War*; the novel *Old School*; and, most recently, *Our Story Begins: New and Selected Stories*.

**Contributors:** Laurie Alberts, Marvin V. Arnett, Charles Barber, Mary Felstiner, Eli Hastings, Sonya Huber, Jonathan Johnson, Ted Kooser, Dinah Lenney, Aaron Raz Link, Lee Martin, Dinty W. Moore, Hilda Raz, Mimi Schwartz, Brenda Serotte, Fan Shen, Peggy Shumaker, Natalia Rachel Singer, Floyd Skloot, John Skoyles, and Janet Sternburg.

## Additional Information

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