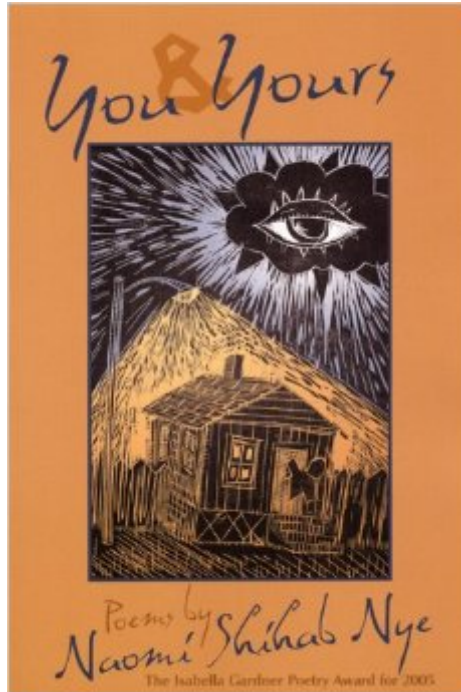


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# You And Yours (American Poets Continuum)



## Synopsis

In *You and Yours*, Naomi Shihab Nye continues her conversation with ordinary people whose lives become, through her empathetic use of poetic language, extraordinary. Nye writes of local life in her inner-city Texas neighborhood, about rural schools and urban communities she's visited in this country, as well as the daily rituals of Jews and Palestinians who live in the war-torn Middle East. The Day I missed the day on which it was said others should not have certain weapons, but we could. Not only could, but should, and do. I missed that day. Was I sleeping? I might have been digging in the yard, doing something small and slow as usual. Or maybe I wasn't born yet. What about all the other people who aren't born? Who will tell them? Balancing direct language with a suggestive easiness, Nye probes the fragile connection between language and meaning. She never shies from the challenge of trying to name the mysterious logic of childhood or speak truth to power in the face of the horrors of war. She understands our lives are marked by tragedy, inequity, and misunderstanding, and that our best chance of surviving our losses and shortcomings is to maintain a heightened awareness of the sacred in all things. Naomi Shihab Nye, poet, editor, anthologist, is a recipient of writing fellowships from the Lannan and Guggenheim foundations. Nye's work has been featured on PBS poetry specials including *NOW with Bill Moyers*, *The Language of Life with Bill Moyers*, and *The United States of Poetry*. She has traveled abroad as a visiting writer on three Arts America tours sponsored by the United States Information Agency. In 2001 she received a presidential appointment to the National Council of the National Endowment for the Humanities. She lives in San Antonio, Texas.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"What countries may we/ sing into?/ What lines should we all/ be crossing?" Naomi Shihab Nye writes poems of grace and humor and wit and tension and ache and remembrance and longing - and of everyday life. Such a sweep of huge ideas comes from her intelligent pen! Living in San Antonio, Texas with her child encourages her to observe the fundamentals of living, of loving, of finding the beauty/spiritual in all things. These poems of Part One of this extraordinary collection are about living. Part Two contains the poetry that speaks most clearly to this reader. While she is always competent to address the darker side of all things in her poems of Part One, in this second body of work she turns her vigilant eye to the horrors of war, giving words to the overwhelming facts of tragedy, death, inequity, and all the unimaginables that escort war in the Middle East - no, in all wars. "There is no 'stray' bullet, sirs./ No bullet like a worried cat/ crouching under a bush,/ no half-hairless puppy bullet/ dodging midnight streets. The bullet could not be a pecan/ plunking the tin roof,/ not hardly, no fluff of pollen/ on October's breath, no humble pebble at our feet....So don't gentle it, please....This bullet had no secret happy hopes,/ it was not singing to itself with eyes closed/ under the bridge." Perhaps it is her Palestinian-American heritage that makes her insight into the ongoing elegy for the Middle East so poignant, or perhaps it is simply that she is a very fine poet, a seer able to paste together the minutiae of living each day with the epoch of facing war head on. She has the gift and we are the better for it. Grady Harp, September 05

I met NSN through Bill Moyer's The Language of Life series and have been a fan ever since. She is a poetry superstar, but she's not the sort of poetry superstar you'd put on a pedestal. She's the kind you'd invite into your kitchen to talk about current events on a truly fundamental, human level -- over a cup of Turkish coffee. As a poet, I truly appreciate the fact that so much of her poetry is about words, the power of simple words, the systematic public abuse of common words. As a Lebanese American, NSN helps me to look on the Middle East at one remove, like her, and with compassion. Her poetry shows why, if we have only one thing clutched in our hands at the very end of everything, it should be our basic humanity. Now, wouldn't you want someone like that to talk to in your kitchen over coffee? In a conversation that would be all poetry, no less?

I enjoyed this book. The poems are so immediate in nature, as if I were in the very settings. The

poet also lets her opinions be known, without ranting or raging. My favorite poems include "My Perfect Stranger," about planes and ethnicity in a post 9/11 world. A great book for those who love poetry, or are interested in poems that protest war.

It took this reader only a few poems to fall in love with the poetry of Naomi Shihab Nye. Her passion for brother and sister human beings, plants, animals, and especially the creativity in children explodes from her poetry. She transports us into her travels, past loves, family, Palestinian roots, and hatred of war effortlessly and courageously. Nye's poems lift veils of prejudice and indifference western society often employs to keep us blind to the hands that plant gardens and the generosity of Arabs to invite strangers in to share tea, food and friendship. Nye is a dynamic teacher on stage, in workshops and through her gritty and honest poetry.

Nye writes wonderful, insightful poems with a touch of humor. I especially like the poem "Canoeing with Alligators." This is a great addition to any poetry collection.

Beautiful poetry, especially "I Feel Sorry For Jesus"

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