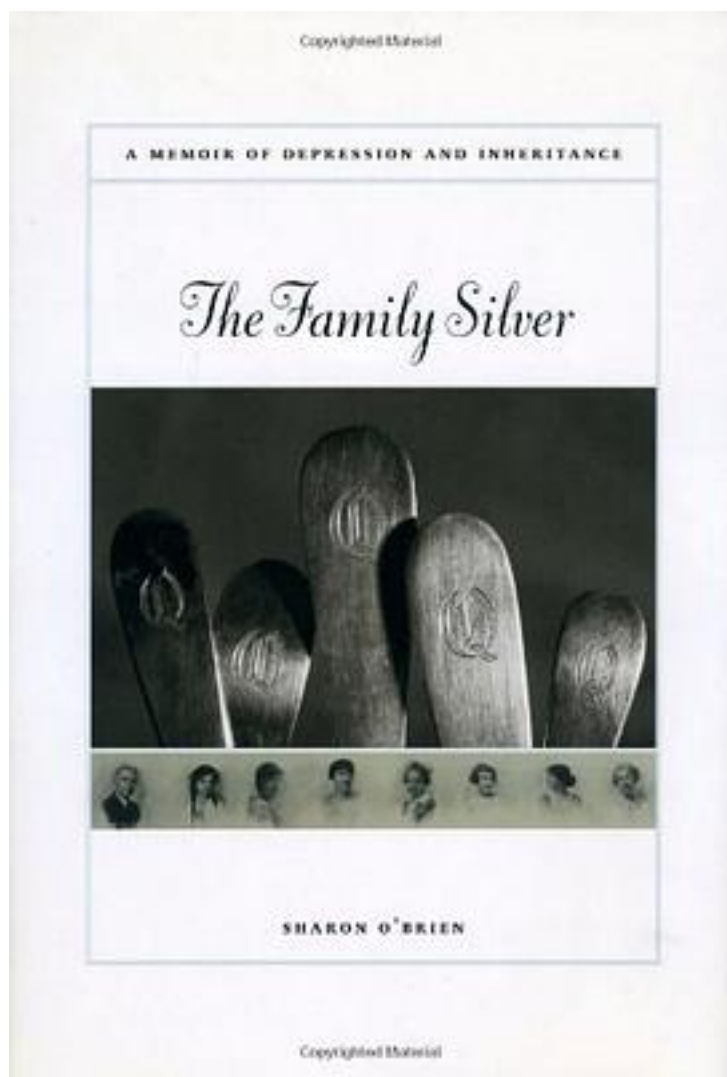


# The Family Silver



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Finding herself struggling with depression (which, "like a rude houseguest," would come and go of its own accord), Sharon O'Brien set out to understand its origins beyond the biochemical explanations and emotional narratives prevailing in contemporary American culture. Her quest for her inheritance took her straight into the pressures and possibilities of American culture, and then to the heart of her family - the generations who shaped and were shaped by one another and their moment in history. In *The Family Silver*, as O'Brien travels into her family's past, she goes beyond depression to discover courage, poetry, and grace. A compassionate and engaging writer, O'Brien uses the biographer's methods to understand her family history, weaving the scattered pieces of the past - her mother's memo books, her father's reading journal, family photographs, tombstones, dance cards, hospital records, the family silver - into a compelling narrative. In the lives of her Irish American relatives she finds that the American values of upward mobility, progress, and the pressure to achieve sparked both desire and depression, following her family through generations, across the sea, from the Irish famine of the 1840s to Harvard Yard in the late 1960s. "Many people who write stories of depression or other chronic illnesses tell tales of recovery in the upward mobility sense, the 'once I was ill, but now I am well' formula that we may find appealing, but doesn't match the messiness of our lives," she writes. "Mine is not such a tale. But it is a recovery tale in another sense - a story of salvage, of rescuing stories from silence." Told with humor and honesty, O'Brien's story will captivate all readers who want to know how they, and their families, have been shaped by the past.

作者介绍:

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