

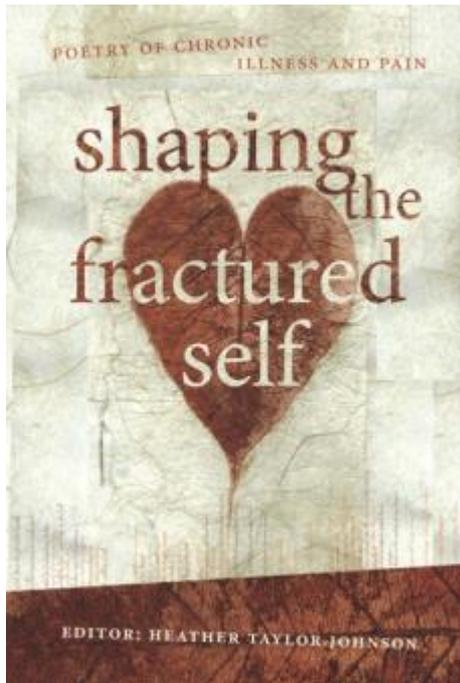
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SHAPING THE FRACTURED SELF

Poetry of chronic illness and pain

Edited by Heather Taylor Johnson



Not all great art has its genesis in pain, and not all pain – not even a fraction – leads to the partial consolations of art. But if lancing an abscess is the surest way to healing, can poetry offer that same cleansing of emotional wounds?

Shaping the Fractured Self showcases twenty-eight of Australia's finest poets who happen to live with chronic illness and pain. The autobiographical short essays, in conjunction with the three poems from each of the poets, capture the body in trauma in its many and varied moods. Because those who live with chronic illness and pain experience shifts in their relationship to it on a yearly, monthly or daily basis, so do the words they use to describe it.

Shaping the Fractured Self gives voice to sufferers, carers, medical practitioners and researchers, building understanding in a community of caring.

About the Editor

Heather Taylor Johnson moved from the US to Australia in 1999 to begin a post graduate degree in Creative Writing. She received a PhD from the University of Adelaide and, while doing so, found a husband and had three children. Her first novel was *Pursuing Love and Death* (HarperCollins 2013) and her second is *Jean Harley Was Here* (UQP 2017). Her fourth book of poetry is *Meanwhile, the Oak* (Five Islands Press, 2016).



She's been writing reviews of poetry and fiction for various literary magazines for more than a decade and regularly reviews films for *InDaily*. She was the poetry editor for *Wet Ink* during the term of its publication and is currently the poetry editor for *Transnational Literature*. She's co-edited two anthologies but *Shaping the Fractured Self* is her first solo effort. Heather has lived with Meniere's disease for almost half of her life and finds the illness keeps making its way into her writing.



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