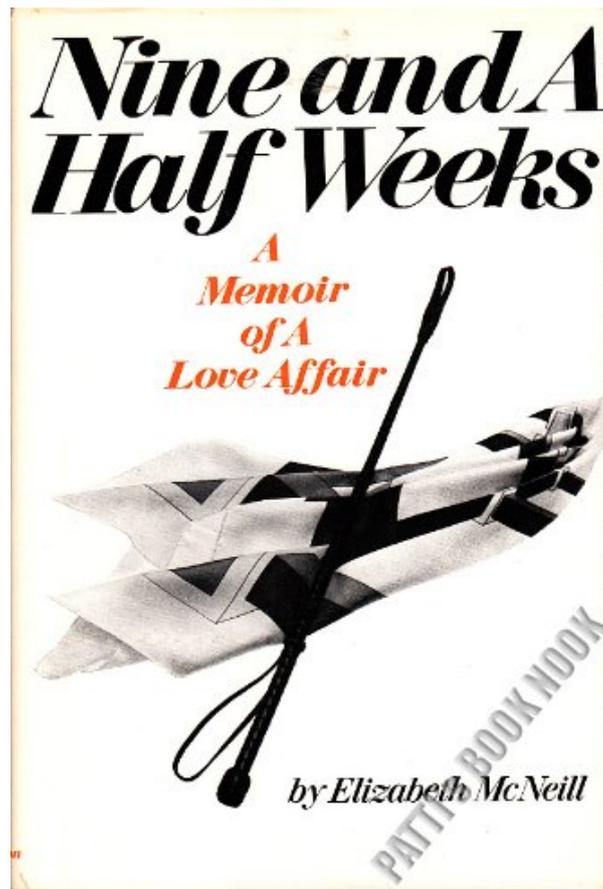
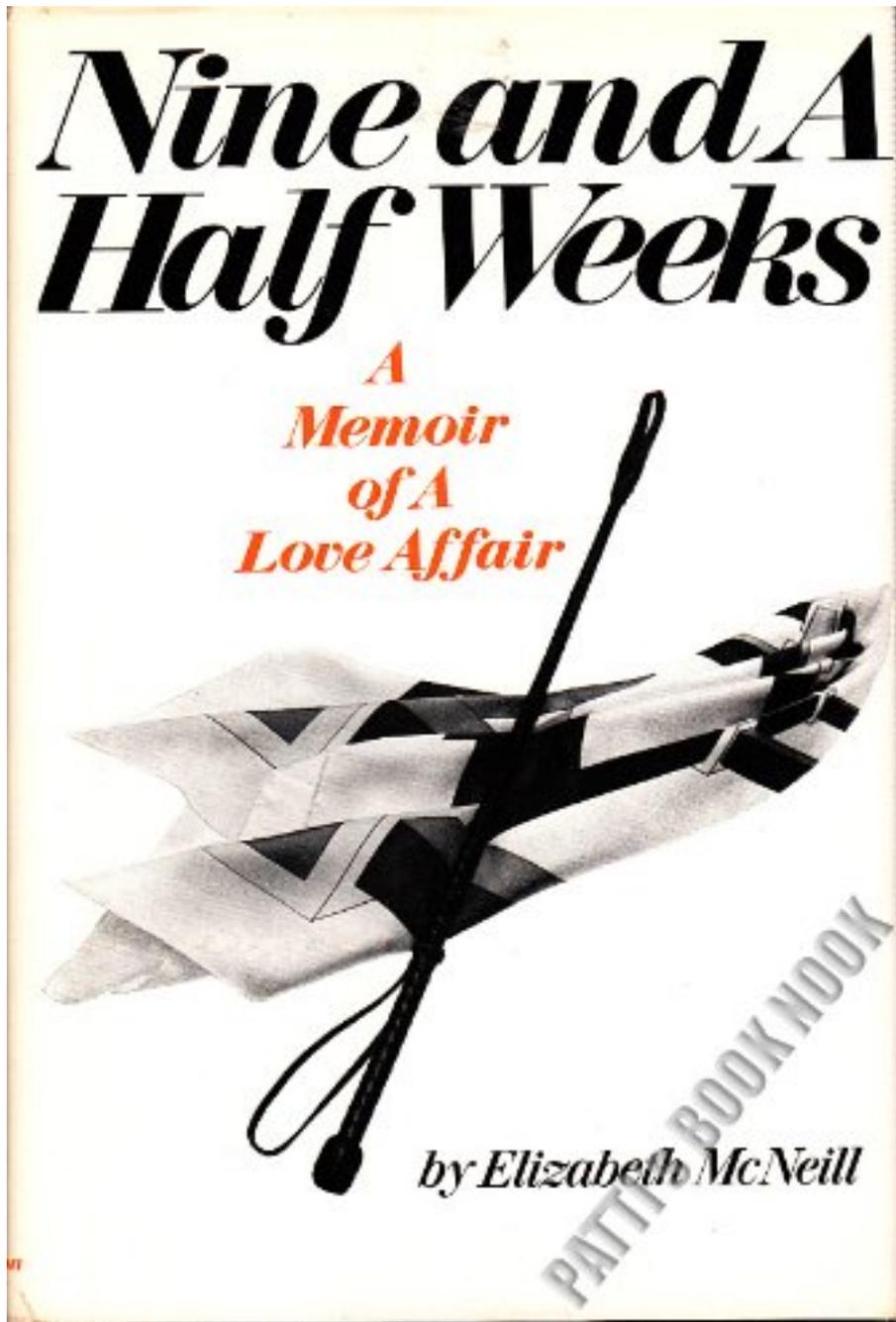


# NINE AND A HALF WEEKS: A MEMOIR OF A LOVE AFFAIR BY ELIZABETH MCNEILL



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## From the Back Cover

The powerfully erotic memoir that inspired the legendary film—with a new afterword by the author's daughter

*Nine and a Half Weeks* is a true story so unusual, so passionate, and so extreme in its psychology and sexuality that it will take your breath away.

Elizabeth McNeill was an executive for a large corporation when she began an affair with a man she met in a chance encounter. Their sexual excitement depended on domination and humiliation, and as their relationship progressed they played out increasingly dangerous and elaborate variations on that pattern. By the end, Elizabeth had relinquished all control over her body—and her mind.

With a cool detachment that makes the experiences and sensations she describes all the more frightening in their intensity, Elizabeth McNeill deftly unfolds her story and invites you into the mesmerizing and shocking world of *Nine and a Half Weeks*—a world you won't soon forget.

## About the Author

Elizabeth McNeill is a pseudonym for Ingeborg Day, author of the memoir *Ghost Waltz*. She was an editor at *Ms.* magazine when both books were published. She died in 2011 at the age of seventy.

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# **NINE AND A HALF WEEKS: A MEMOIR OF A LOVE AFFAIR**

## **BY ELIZABETH MCNEILL PDF**

An erotic novel which became a film starring Mickey Rourke and Kim Basinger. It began as a casual affair and ended nine and a half weeks later in a shattering climax of bondage, humiliation and ecstasy. By day she was a successful career woman in Manhattan; by night, a trembling, erotic slave.

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- Binding: Paperback
- 131 pages

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Most helpful customer reviews

48 of 49 people found the following review helpful.

"There is no mistaking the power this man had over me"

By girldiver

"Nine and a Half Weeks" chronicles the speedy decline of one woman into a relationship of S&M that goes beyond the bedroom and dominates her every action and emotion.

Told in the first person by the woman, you never discover the names of the two characters but you feel the

passion, the love, and the pain both physical and especially emotional. It's disturbing to read complete submission between two people and you think to yourself you'd never turn over so much control to another person but you never really know until you live it.

The simplicity of this book is what really makes it complicated and even more compelling to read. So many books are packed with pages and pages of fluff but this book is exquisite by simply telling the story with out volumous pages of prose. Beautifully written.

girldiver:)

44 of 49 people found the following review helpful.

Love and Power

By Elise Esclave

I saw the original movie to this book when I was 12, in secret from my parents who forbade me to watch it, and it has haunted me since, although I didn't fully understood why until I read the book...

I can see how its easy for someone looking at the story superficially to view what has occurred here as abuse, but its important to understand that nothing that was done between these two employed and consenting adults non-consensual. Elizabeth was always free to leave, she had a place to live and a job that supported her. She didn't stay with John because he physically forced her to. She, underneath her conflicting emotions on the subject, wanted his violence, dominance, and abuse. Her true freedom was obtained through her completely voluntary submission and surrender to him, through being over-powered, taken, and led to the heights and lows of that submission by him. She could only achieve it through him.

Moreover, the "violence" in the book was merely their extreme expression of sexuality, a heightened version of lovemaking so deep, that most would not venture into it. The sensation of moderate pain mixed with pleasure created an association for Elizabeth where she came to crave it as much as she did John's dominance. Their relationship did not fail because it was abusive. Indeed, what seemed like abuse was consensual power exchange that both needed and craved. There were two reasons why their relationship failed. The first was that dominance needs to be responsible to create a lasting relationship. To lead a woman with complete trust in you into a situation that she will find emotionally damaging is irresponsible dominance. When that much power is exchanged, its John's responsibility to make sure to bring her back to an emotionally balanced state, to make it "ok" for her to eat off the floor and watch her lover have sex with someone else. But that brings forth another problem - that of love. In order to properly care for someone to that degree when you carry that much power in a relationship, is to love them. That may create vulnerabilities, which John was not prepared to undertake, because he was too scared of losing power, but it was the only want to sustain that dynamic. To put it plainly, instead of pursuing his fantasies, he should have been more mindful of her emotional and psychological state. When that much power is undertaken by one individual, the responsibility is commensurate with it.

I find it sad that this experience was so damaging to Elizabeth that she went back to normal relationships, in which, of course, she will never find the level of depth and intimacy she has found in this one. Johns' damage was lasting in two respects - in the wonders of the world he has shown her and in the emotional instability he has caused by his irresponsible behavior towards her. There is nothing wrong with wanting to mesh violence with sex, or to have a man pick out clothes for you - if you want it. What is wrong is a man who doesn't appreciate it when you let him do those things to you. When he takes that much honesty and vulnerability for granted, HE should be spanked! When he tells a girl who trusts him with everything to go and rob someone at knife point, putting her in terrible danger, he should have that power removed immediately.

Its not the violence, or the power exchange, or being chained that ended this tryst. Its irresponsible dominance and lack of love. Everything else is tapestry differently colored. Who says that love needs to be gentle and kind? Or equal? who says that every woman must have equal say in a relationship, whether she wants to or not? But whether we are on top or bottom - or sideways - we need to be loved. That is a must.

16 of 16 people found the following review helpful.

Erotic, but disturbingly so

By Aletheia Knights

I'm think I'm the only one in certain circles of my friends who hasn't seen the film adaptation of Elizabeth McNeill's somewhat fictionalized memoir "Nine and a Half Weeks," her account of a brief but consuming love affair. I wanted to read the book first . . . and having finished it, I'm a little stunned.

McNeill's lover (she never gives him a name), seeks to take control almost from the beginning of their relationship. He holds her hands pinned down above her head the first time they have sex. Next time it's a blindfold, and then a bit of light bondage. From there it goes on to slapping her face, and almost before she knows it, she's giving herself up to him completely in ever more disturbing ways. He beats her with a riding crop and a belt, subjects her to public as well as private humiliation for his amusement, keeps her handcuffed for hours at a time, feeds and bathes and dresses her by hand - and she can't get enough. Once a driven and competent career woman, McNeill finds herself sometimes distracted at work with lustful anticipation; other times, she simply moves through the day by rote: only her life with her lover feels truly real. With him, she is "unburdened of adulthood"; in his hands there is "an absolute relinquishing of individuality; an abandoned reveling in the abdication of selfhood." He brings her deeper and deeper under his power, until the day comes that the intensity of her life with him is more than she can bear.

McNeill's poetic prose is as sumptuous as its subject demands, and there are many scenes in this memoir that are powerfully erotic. The writing is frank but never obscene, thoughtful but never analytical (beyond occasional variations of "I'm an independent modern woman, I can't believe I'm doing this"). Her goal is clearly not so much to write about sex as to write about a powerful experience in all its dimensions, and in this she succeeds beautifully. The ambivalence with which her account ends underscores its power: it's almost unnerving that this woman could write so very erotically about an experience that seems to have nearly destroyed her.

Being myself a submissive who couldn't help envying some of McNeill's specific experiences, I still found myself feeling vaguely guilty for my visceral response to her deliciously erotic prose, because the relationship she describes is an abusive one. There is no discussion or negotiation of the terms of the relationship; when she attempts to set limits, he wears her down by threatening to end the relationship; he non-consensually causes harm or discomfort to others for the purposes of erotic satisfaction. (At one point, McNeill commits assault with a deadly weapon at his command.) McNeill never clearly states whether or not her lover attempted to contact her at any point after the last day they spent together, but there is, at least, a strong implication that he didn't - and if that's true, considering the circumstances under which they parted, this man is almost criminally negligent and, to my mind, deserves his own special circle of hell. "Elizabeth McNeill" happens to be the synonym for a woman named Ingeborg Day. Did Ms. Day's lover know that she was the daughter of a member of the Nazi SS, struggling to come to terms with her father's crimes against humanity? Did he know that, a few years before they met, she had lost a son? Did he not know how incredibly vulnerable this woman was, or did he just not care? Or did simply please him to realize just how easy it would be to get her to abdicate responsibility, ethics, and selfhood in exchange for his tender ministrations and the distractions of pleasure and pain?

As a psychosexual exploration, "Nine and a Half Weeks" is powerful stuff. As erotica, however, it needs to

be read with a grain of salt and a pang of conscience.

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