



A Broom of One's Own: Words on Writing, Housecleaning, and Life

By Nancy Peacock

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For the twice-published novelist, reading an article about herself in the *National Enquirer*—under the headline "Here's One for the Books: Cleaning Lady Is an Acclaimed Author"—was more than a shock. It was an inspiration.

In *A Broom of One's Own*, Nancy Peacock, whose first novel was selected by the *New York Times* as a Notable Book of the Year, explores with warmth, wit, and candor what it means to be a writer. An encouragement to all hard-working artists, no matter how they make a living, Peacock's book provides valuable insights and advice on motivation, craft, and criticism while offering hilarious anecdotes about the houses she cleans.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

As a struggling writer, novelist Peacock (*Life Without Water*) took all kinds of jobs to support herself, fantasizing about the day she'd be published and could write full-time. But after two critically acclaimed novels, not only could she not afford to quit cleaning houses for a living, she wasn't sure she wanted to. She hadn't yet developed the confidence, the strong foundation, to write full-time, and cleaning houses provided her with the two things writers love more than anything else... solitude and gossip. But Peacock offers an honest and refreshing look at what life is like for most writers, few of whom can expect to crack the bestseller lists or make it to Oprah's Book Club. She also offers an insider's look at housecleaning that may lead readers to start cleaning their own houses or, at least, be more careful about the messes they leave for their cleaning people. Peacock no longer cleans houses for a living (it began to wear her down physically); now she supplements her income by teaching. If you can't make it to North Carolina for one of her classes, she offers plenty of useful lessons here. (*Apr.*)

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From [Booklist](#)

The life of an artist may sound glamorous and thrilling, but Peacock's life is quite the opposite. Despite having two novels published, Peacock still has to work to keep a roof over her head and she chooses to do so by cleaning houses. Being alone all day gives her time to reflect on her writing and create new stories. When she's outed as the "writing maid" in the *National Enquirer*, she begins to think about what defines her: writing or housecleaning. In this collection of essays, Peacock describes the mundane details of her life and the glimpses into the lives of others that she gleans while scrubbing toilets and vacuuming carpets. She then weaves her observations with advice and reflections on writing to create an unusual mix. Peacock's unconventional approach to work, story, and writing in her honest, conversational, down-to-earth essays proves that art can be accessible to anyone regardless of age, occupation, or level of education. Readers and aspiring novelists will identify with Peacock's Everywoman and Everyman point-of-view. --Hilary Hatton

About the Author

Nancy Peacock is the author of two novels, *Life Without Water* and *Home Across the Road*. She has worked as a housecleaner, bartender, carpenter, locksmith, costumer, baker, waitress, assistant drum maker, and newspaper deliverer. Now a writing teacher, she lives with her husband in Chatham County, North Carolina.

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Phyllis Peters:

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