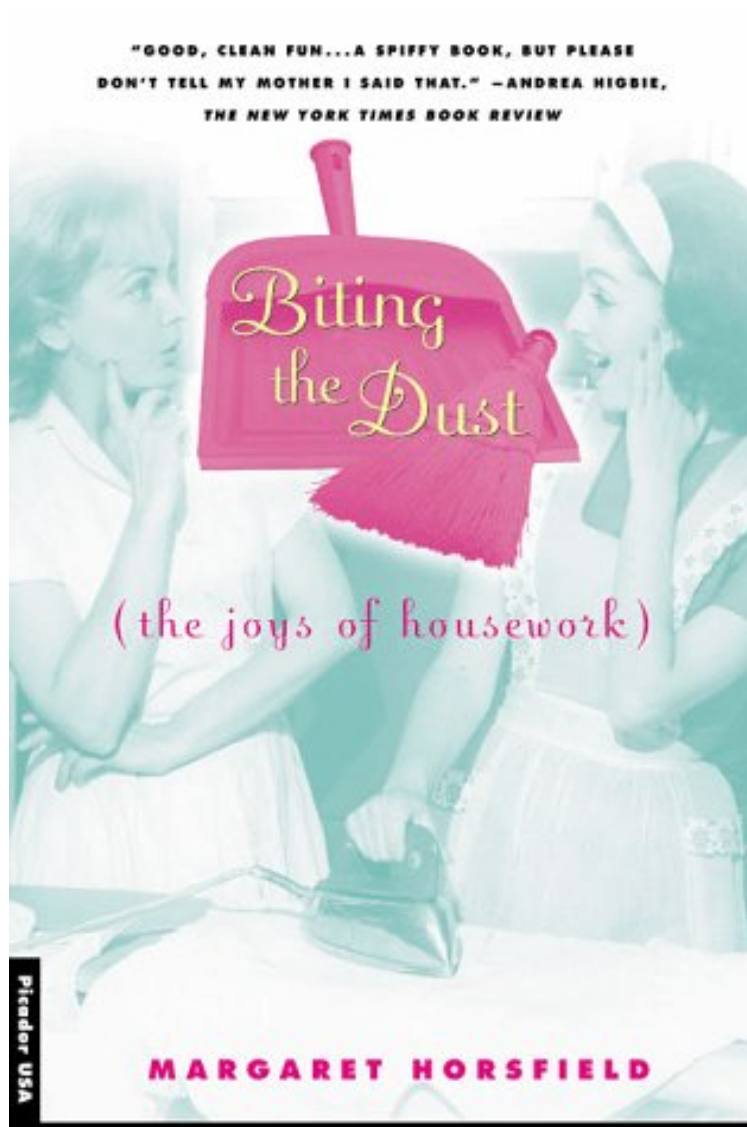


(Download free ebook) Biting the Dust: The Joys of Housework

Biting the Dust: The Joys of Housework

Margaret Horsfield

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Margaret Horsfield : Biting the Dust: The Joys of Housework before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Biting the Dust: The Joys of Housework:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. like the women of the pastBy Janet R BurrowFabulous book! Sparked my desire to be more thorough in my housework, like the women of the past, and to be passionate about my noble calling of being the "mistress " of my home.1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Life Changing - gave me new meaning and focus - Earth Shattering!By PR AdamsThis book changed my life - in fact I had to order a

back up copy because I literally wore my first hardcover copy out with repeated (to this very day) reading of it. I cannot adequately express my gratitude to Ms. Horsfield for her most important contribution to the world with this book. I'll sum it up with, thank you and God bless - you changed my life and I'm so happy I discovered this book. It gave my life a clarity and a focus that was sorely lacking. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful.

EngrossingBy Shawna LanneBITING THE DUST is the best non-fiction book I have read this year. It is a tongue-in-cheek look at the social history of cleaning. It traces the path that led to our obsession (whether we clean or not) with cleaning; explaining how marketers and self appointed moral police made a clean home to not just be something to strive for, but women's moral duty to achieve. Horsfield explains how marketers and proponents of home economics (itself a misogynistic and idiotic construct) used the idea of teeny-tiny germs to enslave a couple of generations of women. All right, that last bit was a tad over dramatic, but you get this picture. The narrative is fascinating and informative. It was great fun to read and I highly recommend it.

In this witty look at our obsession with cleaning, Margaret Horsfield confronts her own dirt demons and scours the social, historical, literary and psychological nooks and crannies of the world of household chores. Through historical research, countless interviews with people and an analysis of characters from novels and advertising, Horsfield presents such memorable personalities as the woman who sends her small daughter to walk around other people's houses in white tights to check for dirt and the mother who, upon her son's suicide, sheds not a tear but stays up all night frantically polishing her already gleaming hardwood floors. From demented television housewives to the redoubtable Mrs. Beeton, *Biting the Dust* runs the gamut of ideas and emotions.

From Publishers Weekly When is a house clean? Like politics and religion, it's one of those questions that tends to bring out peoples' hardwired beliefs. Horsfield, a reporter for BBC, CBC, the Guardian and the Independent, uses her journalistic skills to investigate not only how, but why, we clean. Using historical, literary, psychological and personal sources, she traces the long and tangled evolution. From the beginning, cleaning transcended mere physical implications. It was linked to spiritual and moral cleansing?the ancient battle between good and evil played out between grime and elbow grease. The romantic ideal of the housewife was born, and it was her duty to protect her family from dirt. In the late 19th century, the germ theory of disease scared women onto a new plane of anxiety about the cleanliness of their households. With the introduction of soap around the same time, the media turned method to madness by establishing standards of cleanliness that were suffocating, imprisoning and impossible to live up to. Bringing her subject up to the present, Horsfield blames people like Martha Stewart for perpetuating a kind of "domestic pornography" that encourages women to fight a losing battle by creating yet another impossible, media-fueled ideal. Horsfield couldn't take a more ordinary subject and make it more interesting. In a thought-provoking, informative, yet endlessly entertaining way, she proves housecleaning to be an intensely personal, irrational and self-defining activity, while giving important insight into why a woman's work is never done. Bw illustrations. Copyright 1998 Reed Business Information, Inc. A spiffy book . . . The New York Times Book An often fascinating history that by turns will have you flailing under the beds for dust devils and laughing until your sides ache. The Chicago Tribune An entertaining combination of literary tidbits, social history, and personal recollections . . . wise and witty. The Boston Globe From the Publisher "Good, clean fun...A spiffy book, but please don't tell my mother I said that." -- Andrea Higbie, The New York Times Book "Horsfield wrings something quite wonderful here, an often fascinating social history that by turns will have you flailing under the beds for dust devils and laughing until your sides ache." -- The Miami Herald "An entertaining combination of literary tidbits, social history, and personal recollections...wise and witty." --The Boston Globe "A touchingly obsessive display of research devoted to the history of scrubbing, vacuuming, bleaching and dusting." --Baltimore Sun