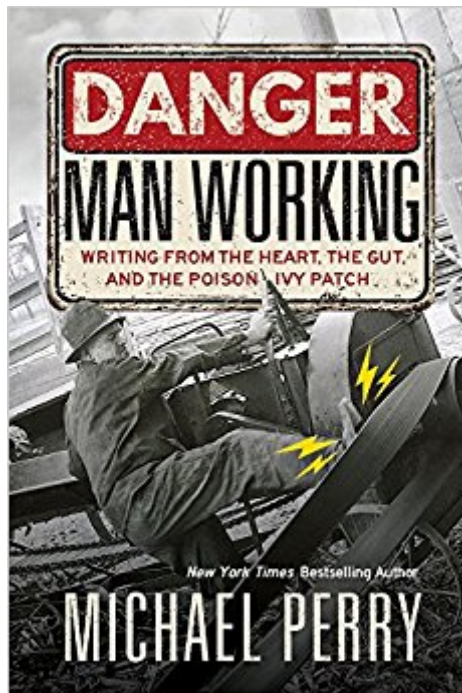




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Danger, Man Working: Writing From The Heart, The Gut, And The Poison Ivy Patch



Synopsis

"Every writer has advice for aspiring writers. Mine is predicated on formative years spent cleaning my father's calf pens: Just keep shoveling until you've got a pile so big, someone has to notice. The fact that I cast my life's work as slung manure simply proves that I recognize an apt metaphor when I accidentally stick it with a pitchfork. . . . Poetry was my first love, my gateway drug •still the poets are my favorites •but I quickly realized I lacked the chops or insights to survive on verse alone. But I wanted to write. Every day. And so I read everything I could about freelancing, and started shoveling." The pieces gathered within this book draw on fifteen years of what Michael Perry calls "shovel time" •a writer going to work as the work is offered. The range of subjects is wide, from musky fishing, puking, and mountain-climbing Iraq War veterans to the frozen head of Ted Williams. Some assignments lead to self-examination of an alarming magnitude (as Perry notes, "It quickly becomes obvious that I am a self-absorbed hypochondriac forever resolving to do better nutritionally and fitness-wise but my follow-through is laughable.") But his favorites are those that allow him to turn the lens outward: "My greatest privilege," he says, "lies not in telling my own story; it lies in being trusted to tell the story of another."

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Growing up in rural Wisconsin, Perry spent his youth shoveling out cow pens on his family farm, and a nose-to-the-grindstone work ethic stuck with him when he took the leap into making a living as a writer. His latest is a collection "drawn from the past fifteen years of shovel time," with subjects varying from dog-sledding and autopsies to high cholesterol and cryonic suspension.

Each essay is enjoyable in and of itself, but assembled as a body of work, they relay the appreciable effort it takes to become a writer, “going to work as the work is offered.” Self-described as lacking in thematic flow, *Danger, Man Working* may seem a somewhat random compilation, but throughout Perry tackles serious issues, like faith, parenting, and stereotypes, without losing his distinct, earnest voice. He has nothing to hide and is straightforward about the hard work it takes to do something well. And Perry continues to do it well, turning his every topic into a tale full of keen observation, humor, and sincerity. (Melissa Norstedt, BookList, July 25, 2017)

Michael Perry is a newspaper columnist and the author of numerous books including *Population: 485* and *Society Press*, *Roughneck Grace* and *From the Top*, as well as the New York Times bestseller *Visiting Tom*. His live humor recordings include *Never Stand Behind a Sneezing Cow* and *The Clodhopper Monologues*. He lives in rural Wisconsin with his wife and daughters and is privileged to serve as a first responder with the local fire department. He can be found online at www.sneezingcow.com.

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