

Housekeeping



INTRODUCTION

BRIEF BIOGRAPHY OF MARILYNNE ROBINSON

Marilynne Robinson was born Marilynne Summers in Sandpoint, Idaho in 1942. She was close with her brother, who also grew up to become a writer and an art historian. After studying American Literature at Pomona College (the former women's college at Brown University), she went on to earn a doctorate in English from the University of Washington, where she wrote her dissertation on Shakespeare's *Henry VI, Part 2*. She penned *Housekeeping* in the late 1970s, and though she expected it to receive little attention, it became a subject of national acclaim and the winner of the prestigious PEN/Hemingway Award for best first novel. After the publication of *Housekeeping*, Robinson turned to nonfiction and completed several books of critical work—she would not release her next novel, *Gilead*, for over twenty years. In 2005, *Gilead* won the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction, and Robinson wrote two follow-up novels, which follow the characters from *Gilead* over the course of the next ten years. She received a 2012 National Humanities Medal from President Barack Obama, and currently lives in Iowa City, where she is Professor Emerita and a former faculty member at the distinguished Iowa Writers' Workshop. She lectures regularly around the country and is honored to be at work on a fourth installment in the *Gilead* saga.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

There is no explicit declaration within the text as to what year the events of the novel take place, but Robinson has stated in interviews that she imagines *Housekeeping* taking place in the 1970s. Robinson herself was born in 1942 in Sandpoint, Idaho—a small town on the edge of a vast lake—and no doubt the atmosphere of her hometown has made its way into the pages of her acclaimed novel. Though the women of *Housekeeping* seem both removed from and uninterested in the political and social world beyond—and even within—their small town, the characters' and townspeople's attitudes about Sylvia's transient ways and ambivalence about her mother's marriage reveal deeper fears about both the breakdown of the idyllic nuclear family unit as well as the idea of women seeking their "duties" and living in pursuit of their own physical, emotional, and intellectual freedoms.

RELATED LITERARY WORKS

One of Marilynne Robinson's primary influences is the composition of *Housekeeping* seems to be Henry David Thoreau. An American writer of the Transcendentalist style, his

book *Walden*, about his life lived apart from society on the edge of an idyllic lake in Massachusetts, contains a deep reverence for nature, an ideological investigation of what it means to be a part of society, and the balance between and beauty of life itself. Robinson also takes inspiration in both her fiction and nonfiction from the sixteenth-century religious thinker and outcaster John Calvin, whose magnum opus of thought on the Christian religion is known today as *Institutes of the Christian Religion*. The future Robinson's cousin—which began with *Housekeeping*, her first novel, in 1980—consists of an accomplished body of fiction and nonfiction which wrestles with the major questions facing humanity: love, responsibility, religion, science, and nature. The themes of memory, loss, and nature established within *Housekeeping* resurface throughout her later novels, most prominently *Gilead*, and her works of nonfiction including *Mother Country* and *When I Was a Child: Four Books*.

KEY FACTS

- **Full Title:** *Housekeeping*
- **When Written:** 1970s
- **Where Written:** Ashland, Massachusetts
- **When Published:** 1980
- **Literary Period:** Contemporary
- **Genre:** Fiction, generational saga, coming-of-age tale
- **Setting:** The fictional town of Fingerbone, Idaho
- **Climate:** Sylvia and Ruth turn down their families' present of home and leave Fingerbone behind.
- **Antagonist:** Lucille
- **Point of View:** First person

EXTRA CREDIT

Happy Accident: Marilynne Robinson's interest in the metaphors, language of sixteenth-century American writers, such as Ralph Waldo Emerson, led her to work privately on a series of extended meditations as an exercise during her PhD program at the University of Washington—an exercise that would become the framework for *Housekeeping*.



PLOT SUMMARY

The adult Ruth Brown looks back on her unrooted childhood. After Ruth and Lucille's mother, Helen, commits suicide, the two sisters go to live in Fingerbone, Idaho, with their grandmother Sylvia Foster. After their grandmother's death, the girls enter the care of their ambitious, spinster great-aunt.

Housekeeping Study Guide

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Housekeeping Study Guide:

A Study Guide for Marilynne Robinson's "Housekeeping" Gale, Cengage Learning, 2016-06-29 A Study Guide for Marilynne Robinson's *Housekeeping* excerpted from Gale's acclaimed *Novels for Students*. This concise study guide includes plot summary, character analysis, author biography, study questions, historical context, suggestions for further reading, and much more. For any literature project, trust *Novels for Students* for all of your research needs. **NOVELS FOR STUDENTS** CENGAGE LEARNING. GALE, 2016

Professional Management of Housekeeping Operations Thomas J. A. Jones, 2007-10-26 Now in its fifth edition, *Professional Management of Housekeeping Operations* is the essential practical introduction to the field, a complete course ranging from key principles of management to budgeting, from staff scheduling to cleaning. With expanded attention to leadership and training, budgeting and cost control, and the increasingly vital responsibility for environmentally safe cleaning, the latest edition of this industry standard also includes new case studies that help readers grasp concepts in a real-world setting. Instructor's Manual, Test Bank in both Word and Respondus formats, Photographs from the text, and PowerPoint Slides are available for download at www.wiley.com/college.

Housekeeper National Learning Corporation, 2014 The *Housekeeper Passbook R* prepares you for your test by allowing you to take practice exams in the subjects you need to study. It provides hundreds of questions and answers in the areas that will likely be covered on your upcoming exam, including but not limited to: Supervision and staff training, scheduling, counseling, and evaluating; Conducting staff meetings; Communicating work performance; Hospital housekeeping procedures; and more. **Safety Professional's Reference and Study Guide** W. David Yates, 2017-12-12 While there are numerous technical resources available, often you have to search through a plethora of them to find the information you use on a daily basis. And maintaining a library suitable for a comprehensive practice can become quite costly. The new edition of a bestseller, *Safety Professional's Reference and Study Guide*, Second Edition, provides a single source reference that contains all the information required to handle the day-to-day tasks of a practicing industrial hygienist. New Chapters in the Second Edition cover: Behavior-based safety programs; Safety auditing procedures and techniques; Environmental management; Measuring health and safety performance; OSHA's laboratory safety standard; Process safety management standard; BCSP's Code of Ethics. The book provides a quick desk reference as well as a resource for preparations for the Associate Safety Professional (ASP), Certified Safety Professional (CSP), Occupational Health and Safety Technologist (OHST), and the Construction Health and Safety Technologist (CHST) examinations. A collection of information drawn from textbooks, journals, and the author's more than 25 years of experience, the reference provides as the title implies, not just a study guide but a reference that has staying power on your library shelf. **The National Nursing Home License Exam Study Guide** Melissa Tracey, Kenneth M. Bowman, 1997 Designed to help nursing home administrators, managers, and Directors of Nursing (DON) study for the national exam, a complete chapter is devoted to each of the major exam domains: resident care, management, personnel management, financial management, environmental

management and organizational management Each chapter contains a summary of what the nursing home administrator or DON should know about the subject followed by a list of pertinent terms and definitions A series of practice questions complete with correct answers and explanations for those answers is included **Job Corps Center Review Guide** ,1986

Summaries of Studies in Agricultural Education American Vocational Association. Agricultural Education Section,1961

Distributive Education Instructional Materials Ohio State University. Center for Vocational and Technical Education,1972

CTH - Housekeeping and Accommodation Operations BPP Learning Media,2009-07-01 BPP Learning Media is proud to be the official publisher for CTH Our CTH Study Guides provide the perfect tailor made learning resource for the CTH examinations and are also a useful source of reference and information for those planning a career in the hospitality and tourism industries *Executive Housekeeping Today* ,2010 **Home Economics Education; Instructional Materials**

Ohio State University. Center for Vocational and Technical Education,1972 Compilation of abstracts of teaching and training materials specific to the field of home economics education in the USA includes such specific areas as child care occupations consumer education day care programmes home management etc Distributive Education from AIM, 1967-1971 United States. Office of Education,1972

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Monthly Catalog of United States Government Publications, Cumulative Index United States. Superintendent of Documents,1976 **Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature** ,1915

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