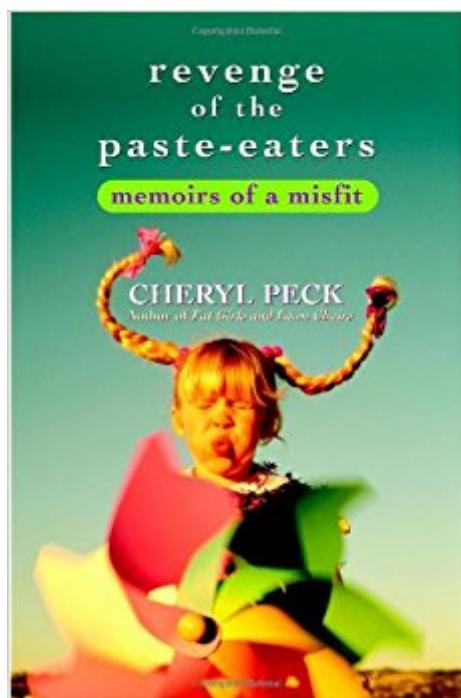


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Revenge Of The Paste Eaters: Memoirs Of A Misfit



Synopsis

The author of "Fat Girls and Lawn Chairs" is back with a funny and poignant new collection of personal stories about growing up a misfit.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Cheryl Peck lives in Three Rivers, Michigan with her cat Babycakes.

I'm a big fan of humor memoirs--David Sedaris, Jenny Lawson and the like. I had a lot of hope for this book and thought it would be up there with those authors. I was sorely disappointed. I found this author's voice dull, annoying, and worst of all, not funny. While many other authors I like who write books of this style are self-conscious, self-deprecating and neurotic, they all manage to make their anecdotes endearing, funny, and interesting. Unfortunately Peck did not accomplish any of this, and it felt as though she was trying too hard as well. I was only able to get through 1/3 of the book before giving up. I might give it a try again at some point but right now it's probably going in a donation bin.

Cheryl is a blend of everything that makes a great author and this book is not just funny, it's truth. Growing up in this area of Michigan I can not only relate to her stories but the idea of being a kid again is what this book creates for the reader. One can be young and wonderful inside while growing up on the outside and this book is just that! Thanks for another great piece, Cheryl! You have created a life long fan.

Peck's honest insights into everyday life draw us together.

Loved the book and the writing style. It is as if you are hearing someone tell her stories. Great summer read!

I reviewed this very funny book years back for a magazine that has since gone out of print. I'm copying in most of my review in hopes that it will help boost its ebook sales—or at least the mood of the author if she ever reads this."Cheryl Peck may be the fifty-something, plus-size, lesbian counterpart to David Sedaris. Like the offbeat and hugely popular Sedaris, Peck specializes in writing personal essays that describe in hilarious detail the dramas and personalities that made up her childhood and fill her present life. In her second book, *revenge of the paste eaters: memoirs of a misfit*, she displays a wonderful talent for depicting her ordinary life in writing that is comical, heartfelt, and at times painfully honest. Peck has a wry, verging-on-severe take on Other People, which is perfectly logical given her experience as an overweight, middle-aged gay woman from the heartland, especially one who has worked two decades in a government human services agency. Throw in a large cast of quirky family members, a brazen cat named Babycakes, and a penchant for self-drama, and it is clear why Peck felt compelled to become a writer. But these essays are more than a series of comic outtakes. Peck also shares hard-fought insights about coming out of the closet, struggling with her creative ambitions, and coming ruefully to terms with a body that is XXL. Peck can occasionally sound like Garrison Keillor. "In my heart I am a Midwesterner, and my people live by three simple rules: work hard; wait for your turn; if you feel the need to talk about something, go plow a field until the need passes." The author points out that she was, like many Midwestern children, raised with conflicting ideas: that she was Special and should amount to Something, but that she should never get a Big Head. Writing was a way for her to "feed that beast"--her creative ego. With the help of a local composting firm, Peck self-published her first volume of essays, fearful it would soon be turned into worm bedding. The word-of-mouth reviews were so good that her debut book was eventually sold to a major publisher, which reissued it in satisfyingly large quantities. *Fat Girls and Lawn Chairs* met with glowing reviews that often cited the author's engaging, self-deprecating voice. Peck was the sort of young girl who wandered her local gravel pit in a mood of penetrating moroseness. And who ate the paste in grade school. She has always been larger and smarter than the people around her, something she is no longer afraid to discuss. Some essays contain a dash of gentle misanthropy. She has always had a thing about tiny,

blonde women, for instance. She knows it is a flaw and is trying to address it. She hates having to get to know her waitresses. She claims to be downright vicious if a meal is overdue. And she is dubious about "neighboring," loathe to enter into any high-maintenance relationships. No one reading this book would mistake her for Lady Bountiful. She wryly alludes to her clients' neediness and disregard for her as an individual as well as their shaky sense of cause and effect (e.g., what happens when utility bills aren't paid). She admits to profound disappointment that her first book didn't make her rich enough to allow her to walk away from her day job. One of her funniest pieces is about the pet rabbit her parents fobbed off on her in lieu of a longed-for horse. To this day, she remembers Millie as a "perverse and malignant" creature who actively hated the girl-child in charge of her. "[Millie] would sit out there in her cage behind the garage and make up lies to tell my father about how often she had been fed or watered." Perhaps the rabbit knew where it stood with Peck, e.g., it stood no chance at all of being a substitute for a horse. Despite Peck's passion for grade school paste, she claims that it was totally tasteless. "Those of us who ate paste ate it as if eating enough of it would make it taste the way it smelled." On the other hand, *Revenge of the Paste Eaters* is endlessly tasty and satisfying. You have only to sample a few essays to discover the truth of this. "Reviewed by Rebecca BurkeAuthor, *What if the Hokey Pokey Really Is What It's All About?*

I'm male, straight and nearly 12 years older than Ms. Peck, but I recognized plenty of situations in her memoir that gave me smiles, sighs or in a few spots, large laughs. I have not read her first book, but among the topics she gets right in this one are psychics, early '60's Ford products, cat thoughts, elementary school cruelties, junior high coed ballroom dancing classes and pink eye. I grew up skinny, poor and shy in New Jersey, mystified by my parents, out of sync with siblings, comforted by public libraries, recorded music and cats and dogs. This book is an uneven series of brief essays, some intended to be funny, some more serious, but most worth reading. The author reveals herself to be someone you can imagine having as a good neighbor or a good friend. She's a state human services worker in the upper Midwest, and I believe there are other and even better books to come from her remembered life and her imagination.

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