



Life Work

Donald Hall

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Distinguished poet Donald Hall reflects on the meaning of work, solitude, and love

"The best new book I have read this year, of extraordinary nobility and wisdom. It will remain with me always."—Louis Begley, *The New York Times*

"A sustained meditation on work as the key to personal happiness. . . . *Life Work* reads most of all like a first-person psychological novel with a poet named Donald Hall as its protagonist. . . . Hall's particular talents ultimately [are] for the memoir, a genre in which he has few living equals. In his hands the memoir is only partially an autobiographical genre. He pours both his full critical intelligence and poetic sensibility into the form."—Dana Gioia, *Los Angeles Times*

"Hall . . . here offers a meditative look at his life as a writer in a spare and beautifully crafted memoir. Devoted to his art, Hall can barely wait for the sun to rise each morning so that he can begin the task of shaping words."—*Publishers Weekly* (starred review)

"I [am] delighted and moved by Donald Hall's *Life Work*, his autobiographical tribute to sheer work--as distinguished from labor--as the most satisfying and ennobling of activities, whether one is writing, canning vegetables or playing a dung fork on a New Hampshire farm."—Paul Fussell, *The Boston Globe*

"Donald Hall's *Life Work* has been strangely gripping, what with his daily to do lists, his ruminations on the sublimating power of work. Hall has written so much about that house in New Hampshire where he lives that I'm beginning to think of it less as a place than a state of mind. I find it odd that a creative mind can work with such Spartan organization (he describes waiting for the alarm to go off at 4:45 AM, so eager is he to get to his desk) at such a mysterious activity (making a poem work) without getting in the way of itself."—John Freeman's blog (National Book Critics Circle Board President)

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