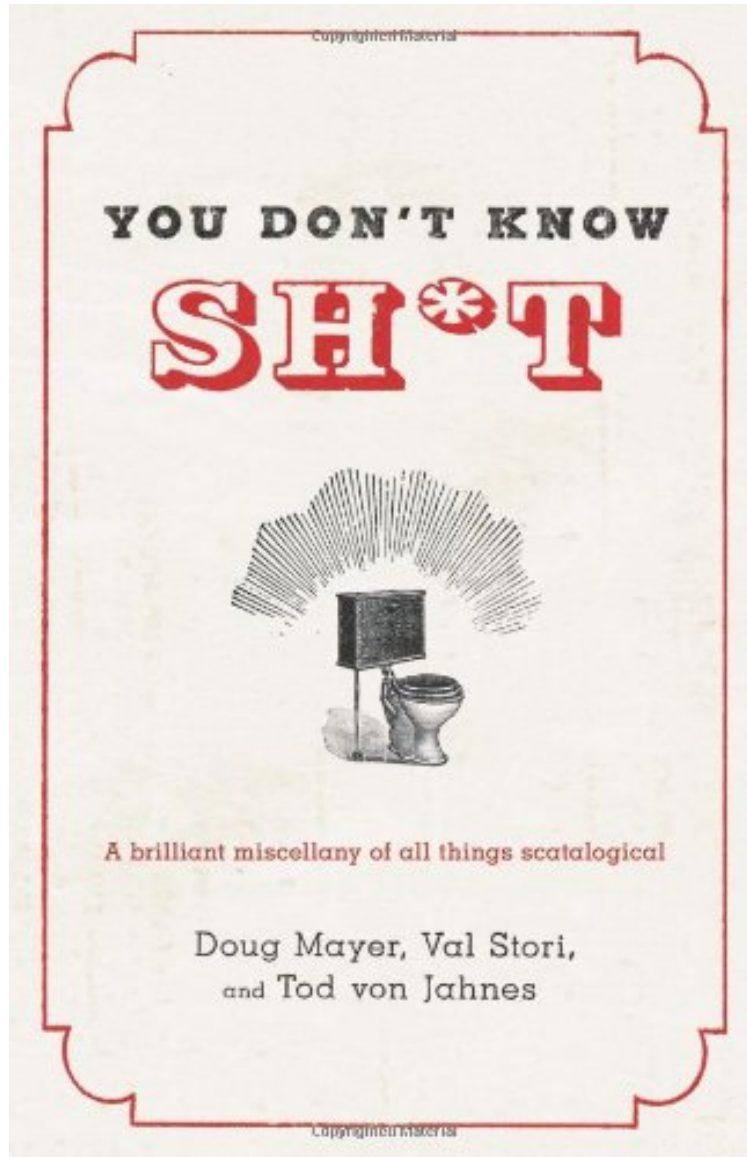


(Download) You Don't Know Sh\*t

## You Don't Know Sh\*t

*Doug Mayer, Val Stori, Tod von Jahnes*  
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**Doug Mayer, Val Stori, Tod von Jahnes : You Don't Know Sh\*t** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised You Don't Know Sh\*t:

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A brilliant miscellany of all things scatological "You Don't Know Sh\*t glides from the sublime heights of human ingenuity to the lowest of the lower depths. It's the ultimate human journey."?Frederick Kaufman, author of *Wasteland*It's part of all of our lives. But how much do you really know about poop, scat, sh\*t, excrement? From the historical to the scientific, the cultural to the gross, *You Don't Know Sh\*t* packs a load of solid information into one tidy volume:--how great civilizations have pooped through the ages--why some poop floats and other poop sinks--the final word on whether people have individual brands of bathroom smells--what your sh\*t (and sh\*tting style) says about you--how astronauts poop in space--a complete glossary of terms and euphemisms for man's most fundamental function--fun facts about everything from the first flush, the famous Thomas Crapper, and the differences in bathroom basics around the world--a cloud's worth of information about farts, too!

About the AuthorDOUG MAYER is one of the creators of the Porn for Women series. He is a producer for "Car Talk" from National Public Radio, and lives in New Hampshire's White Mountains. VAL STORI and TOD VON JAHNES are experts on excrement; they live in Vermont, and Washington State, respectively.Excerpt. © Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved.1 SHITTING THROUGH THE AGES The scent of artificial lilacs wafts through your bathroom. You rise from your sanitary porcelain throne, glance casually down (hey, it's okay—we all do), press a lever, and watch as your latest creation vanishes down the pipe.But have you ever thought about what pooping must have been like long before the Ty-D-Bol Man, Mr. Whipple, and your local plumber helped make it all go away?Imagine dropping trou alongside twenty neighbors. Or pinching a loaf as a humble offering to Sterculius, the Roman god of feces. Or entertaining guests while seated on your "throne," then having a "groom of the stool" wipe and possibly even kiss your ass? It all happened many poops ago.And where did all that shit go, in the days of yore? We left it in our cave. We tossed it out the window and hollered, "Gardylloo!" Or we pooped into the moat—an unhappy surprise for attackers, but a thoughtful thank-you for the hungry fish far below.As always, some cultures beat others to the pinch. Londoners were still heaving the contents of their chamber pots onto the streets dozens of centuries after the ancient Greeks had invented perfectly good sewage systems.The history of shit is as rich and as varied as, well, poop itself. To take a look at where it first started, we first need to do a little digging. Literally.Some Really Old ShitAncient civilizations have left all kinds of clues for archaeologists, from arrowheads to pottery shards. For some archaeologists, though, the Holy Grail isn't a golden chalice, but a petrified brown lump.Why are fossilized feces such a field day for archaeologists? Find just one and you can figure out the gender of the dumper and his or her diet and diseases—even the bacteria and viruses that he or she might have been carrying around.With all that information just a poop away, it's easy to imagine that a team of scientists digging in the Paisley 5 Mile Point Cave in Oregon must have high-fived each other when they found six piles of super-special shit that was really, really old.The year was 2002, and the team had found the oldest shits ever discovered in the New World. And what did it look like after all those years? Said one team member, "Basically it looks like what it is: poop."But what poops they were! Radiocarbon dating revealed the poops to be 12,300 RCYBP (radiocarbon years before the present)—meaning humans had been living in the Americas more than a thousand years earlier than previously thought. Not only that, but this shit had more in common with its Siberian relatives than with other poops in the Americas. Meaning the New World's earliest residents weren't actually natives. They dropped in after a long walk or a boat trip down the Alaskan coast.As for their diet, those first Americans pooped out quite a range of morsels, including squirrel, bison, fish, birds, plants—even, we're loath to admit, a few dogs.DEEP SHIT!Want to freshen up some old poo? Here's how archaeologist Dr. Eric Callen does it: Soak it in a solution of 0.5 percent trisodium phosphate for forty-eight hours, and bingo! Poop up to ten thousand years old is almost as good as new.Who knew poo could be so telling? University of Oregon archaeologist Dennis Jenkins did. As one of the scientists who found the Paisley Cave shit, he said, "You don't think of it, but you're leaving behind genetic signatures every morning." (Another reason to double-check that everything goes down with the flush. Who needs incriminating DNA evidence swirling around in the master bathroom?)The Poo That BetraysPoop can be enlightening in other ways, too. Sometimes, though, poo tells you a bit more than you'd like to know.For years, scientists argued about whether cannibalism occurred in the American Southwest. They'd found cut marks on human bones, but for some, that wasn't enough evidence. Then in 1993, University of North Carolina archaeologists unearthed an 850-year-old shit at a site called Cowboy Wash in Colorado. That poop contained traces of the protein myoglobin, which is only found in human heart muscle. Not only that, but it had been cooked first. (No recipes were found, to answer your next question.)This not-so-savory discovery coincides with a period of severe drought, which anthropologists have blamed for the cannibalism. Other hair-curling theories involve warfare cannibalism, cross-cultural clashes, or even witchcraft. We'll never know which theory is right. We just hope the victor enjoyed the meal as much as Hannibal "I'm having an old friend for dinner" Lecter.DEEP SHIT!Digging for poo may not be for you. Shit archaeologists tend not to have long careers. Unsurprisingly, the discipline isn't high on the academic totem pole. According to shit scientist Karl Reinhard, many shit researchers do just one or two coprolite studies, then move on to something a bit more "socially acceptable." "What Have the Romans Ever Done for Us?"Sad

to say for New World residents, but long before early Coloradans were busily eating each other, the Roman empire had already established an incredibly advanced system of sewers and public toilets. As early as the tenth century BC, Rome had public baths and toilets, complete with sewers and flowing water. The baths were popular meeting places, and Romans weren't shy about lightening their load while chatting with a neighbor on a stone double-seater. Some of the toilets even had a dozen or more seats next to each other. Not only was there no shame in communal pooping, but apparently Romans did not mind wiping with a shared implement. Titus and Lucius had the severe misfortune of having to share a sponge to wipe their asses; these sponges were kept in buckets of salty water for "sanitation" purposes. How did the Romans create such an advanced system? They had the world's first plumbers. Highly sought after—as they are today—the well-regarded plumberi were often women. Early Roman plumberi were so good at their work, their sewers lasted for centuries. In fact, one of the Roman sewer systems, the Cloaca Maxima, is still in use today, draining city runoff from downtown Rome into the Tiber River. In a foreshadowing of many subsequent years of organized crime, the early Italians even used the system to dispose of bodies—including, according to rumor, the emperor Elagabalus. Great sanitation, impressive aqueducts, and shit leaving town faster than you can say "carpe faeces." What could possibly go wrong? A Setback for Shit: Rome Spirals Down the Lavatorium Managing a Roman sewer system took more than a few good plumberi. It also took an organized civil society, with plenty of workers and lots of denarii to pay the bill. Lose all that and what happens? The taps go off, the sewers clog, and you guessed it: The shit hits the fan. And that's exactly what happened. With the collapse of the Roman empire, European cities fell apart. Even though cities like London had excellent Roman-built sewage systems, no one bothered to maintain them. So everyone left—in droves. They went back to the countryside. And when it came to shit management, thousand-year-old habits like chamber pots and shit trenches were back in a jiffy. All that primitive pooping was okay—as long as everyone was spread out in the countryside. But after many years, cities once again started growing in size. And this time they were lacking all that Roman shit know-how. That spelled more than just trouble. It also spelled d-i-s-e-a-s-e and p-e-s-t-i-l-e-n-c-e. The Dark Ages: When Shit Ruled "Dung and other filth had accumulated in diverse places upon the banks of the river with ... fumes and other abominable stenches arising therefrom."—Peter Ackroyd, *Thames: The Biography* With sewage systems crumbling, just how did you poop if you had the misfortune to find yourself living in a crowded, walled-in medieval city? It was simple—way too simple, to be honest. Residents would give fair warning by hollering "Gardyloo!" and then would heave a chamber pot full of shit out the window. The phrase comes from the French *Gardez à l'eau!* meaning "Look out for the water!" This was a polite way of saying "I'm about to dump a bucket of fresh shit out the window." We have to imagine that it sent pedestrians hightailing it for cover. KNOW SHIT! "Gardyloo" eventually got abbreviated into loo, the British slang word for toilet. Medieval urbanites not lucky enough to own a chamber pot or have a shit pit behind their houses had no choice but to use a communal privy—very much at their own risk. It wasn't unusual for someone to fall through the boards and meet a particularly pungent end. Usually the poor mired serf was lost to history. But not always. In one of the best-documented moments of a major social faux pas, the floor in the Great Hall of Germany's Erfurt Castle collapsed during a dinner party in 1183. Emperor Frederick I and his knights fell thirty-nine feet into a cesspit. Many drowned, but Frederick pulled through—none the worse for the wear, though presumably it was a while before his guests accepted another dinner invite. With shit heaped high everywhere, you'd think those in charge would build a few public toilets. But if you think it's hard to find a public toilet these days, consider this: The entire medieval city of London had only three public toilets—Temple Bridge, Fleet Street, and Queenhithe, if you want to really impress your friends. Enough of This Shit, Already! Shit in the streets. Shit in the gutter. Shit out ...