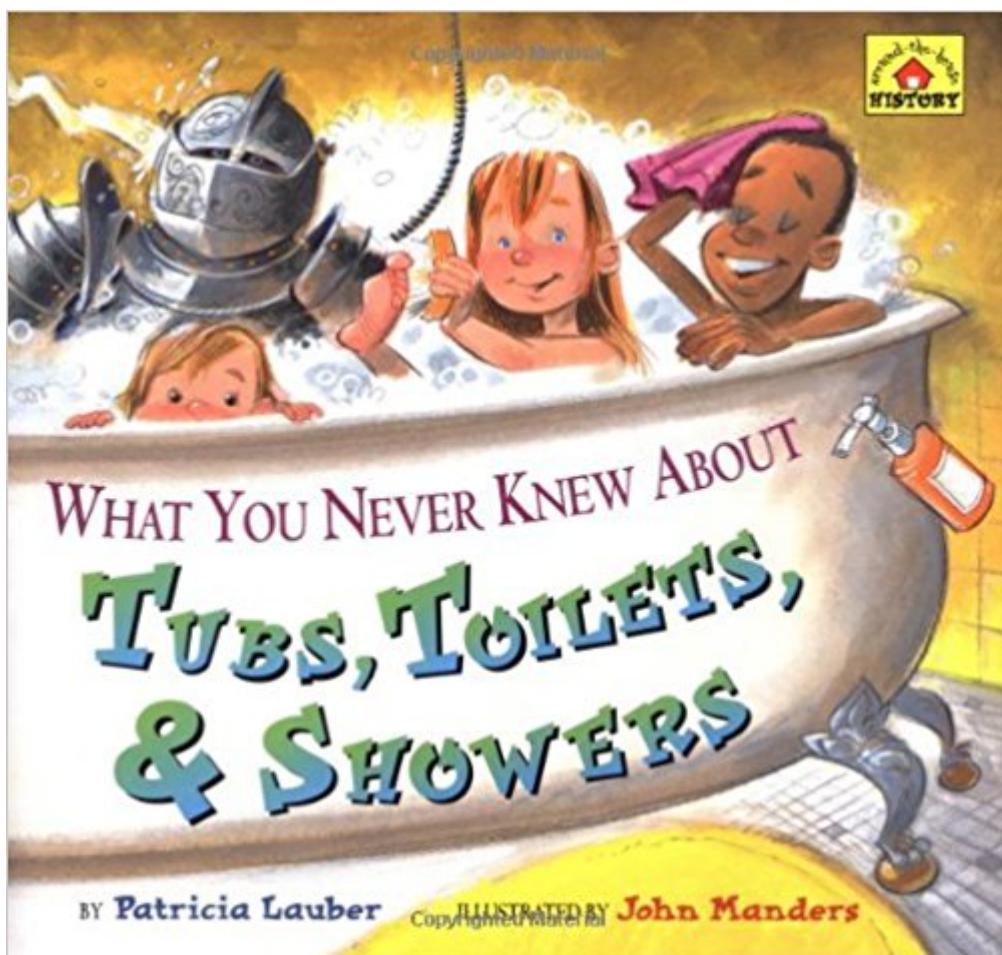


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What You Never Knew About Tubs, Toilets, & Showers (Around-The-House History)



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Synopsis

In the Middle Ages, St. Francis of Assisi listed dirtiness as a sign of holiness... But by the mid 1800s clean was in. The early Greeks and Romans were among the first to build public baths and toilets. One of the biggest Roman baths held three thousand people at once -- and everyone went naked! But when those empires fell, so did the standard for cleanliness. It would be 1,400 years before bathing came back into style. Newbery Honor-wining author Patricia Lauber and artist John Manders team up again to tackle the dirty business of getting clean in their latest book, *What You Never Knew About Tubs, Toilets, & Showers*. In this hilarious how-to of bathing and bathrooms, readers can take a trip through the stalls of history and learn not only how bathrooms came to be, but who used them and why.

Book Information

Age Range: 6 and up

Lexile Measure: IG730L (What's this?)

Series: Around-The-House History

Hardcover: 40 pages

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Customer Reviews

Gr 1-4-A lighthearted but fact-filled look at plumbing throughout history. Starting with the Stone Age, Lauber traces key developments related to bathing, washing, and the disposal of human waste. The ways in which different civilizations met the practical challenges of providing efficient tubs and toilets are fascinating. A conversational tone makes the text accessible, with just enough facts and figures included to give the information substance. Specific details and general observations work together

to create an entertaining overview of the topic. Cartoon illustrations, many with dialogue balloons, add more humor. Figures are lively caricatures, with a variety of sometimes bare bodies showing bathroom practices through the ages. The exaggerations in the illustrations present humorous looks at such conditions as dumping chamber pots onto the street and therapeutic ice-water showers. Though many of the pencil-and-watercolor cartoons will evoke giggles, they also successfully depict historical scenes in ways that readers will remember. Much of the history centers on Europe, and later America, but a two-page spread shows the emphasis that other civilizations placed on sanitation. The intriguing historical facts and the clever humor make this an excellent title for nonfiction booktalking. Readers wanting a more thorough, but no less fascinating presentation can move up to Penny Colman's *Toilets, Bathtubs, Sinks, and Sewers* (Atheneum, 1994). Steven Engelfried, Deschutes County Library, Bend, OR
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Gr. 2-4. Humorous cartoon-style artwork in mixed media lightheartedly advances this picture-book history of baths and toilets. Looking back as far as the Stone Age, Lauber efficiently telescopes history to reveal that the earliest-known bathtub--a large pottery bowl--came from ancient Crete. The Romans built both private and public baths. One huge facility accommodated 3,000 bathers simultaneously. Public toilets were found in ancient Roman and Greek cities. Amusing sidebars poke fun at the primitive waste-disposal methods that prevailed through the ages. Youngsters will roar in delight at the sight of King Louis XIV of France receiving visitors while seated on his closestool (a chamber pot hidden beneath an upholstered seat). They'll also be intrigued to discover that baths were considered unhealthy during the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. Not until the discovery of germs in the mid-1800s was the importance of cleanliness recognized, and it wasn't until 1851 that the White House had a bathtub with running water. Children will relish this comic history; pair it with Mick Manning's *Wash, Scrub, Brush!* [BKL My 1 01], which is a more practical approach to good grooming. Ellen Mandel
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After I had read their book on the history of dining, I couldn't wait for this one. *Tubs, Toilets and Showers* handles the awkward subjects of what you do in the bathroom and how people used to do it. It has vignettes from several cultures and time periods. Many children (and some adults) will be surprised to learn that the Europeans came to value cleanliness much later than did many other cultures. They may laugh to imagine how certain historical figures might have smelled. Since the book deals with bathing and eliminating, some of the illustrations do involve nudity. However, the

illustrator has drawn the cartoons in such a way that genital areas are hidden. I would not find the drawings objectionable for young children. Baths and hygiene are often areas of conflict between parents and children. A book like this could give some perspective, and its humor could soften the family bathroom struggles.

My 8-yr old nephew loves this book and the other two in this series. He's read them so many times over and over again. Although the book seems to be about only tubs, toilets, and showers, it is very educational because it puts them in the context of history over the ages (e.g. stone age, middle ages, etc). So, children are also learning history. Additionally, the writing is very engaging. I wish there were more in this series.

The book I purchased was in wonderful condition. It's better than the one we already have on our shelf. Thanks!

A quick history about plumbing, bathing, and attitudes towards cleanliness! Lauber takes us on a jaunt through history starting with the cave man and his ideas about bathing. She then jumps to the ancient Middle East, and then moves on to Greece and Rome. Then she covers the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. Lauber then moves to the United States, and the rest of the book focuses on modern bathing. The book is illustrated by John Manders (who does an excellent job adding bits of humor in his drawings), and does not include any photographs of ancient ruins or artifacts or the like. But there is still plenty of information--did you know that ancient Romans used a sponge on the end of a stick instead of toilet paper? The stick was rinsed in salty water after they used it. And that a flush toilet was invented in 1594? This is a readable nonfiction book that makes learning about the history of cleanliness fun.

I loved it! I thought the colorful illustrations were hilarious. The book not only entertains, it provides the reader with useful research information. Amusing sidebars poke fun at the primitive waste-disposal methods that prevailed through the ages. Readers will also be amazed to discover that baths were considered unhealthy during the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. It was not until the discovery of germs in the mid-1800s that the importance of cleanliness was recognized, and it wasn't until 1851 that the White House had a bathtub with running water. My only concern about the use of this book within the classroom would be the colorful illustrations of naked peoples backsides. The language of the book was very easy to follow and comprehend, which would benefit students

ages 5 - up.

The question, "Where did they go to the bathroom?" is asked at living history museums all the time! Both adults and children want to know the every day details of basic human needs. At the Royal Governor's Palace, the jail, the courthouse, and the homes of signers of the Declaration of Independence -- THAT'S the question whispered by blushing adults or blurted out by curious children. This book answers all these questions in an honest, entertaining and accurate manner. The illustrations are appropriate for both children and adults. They are less revealing and/or "inappropriate" than classical art. I heartily recommend this book!

While I found much of the information interesting, I thought the author and especially the illustrator crossed the line. I do not find this book or its illustrations appropriate for elementary age children.* Nudity* Illustrations of men and women bathing together* One illustration actually shows a woman's nipple VERY INAPPROPRIATE and I am disappointed that my children's elementary school has this in its library.

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