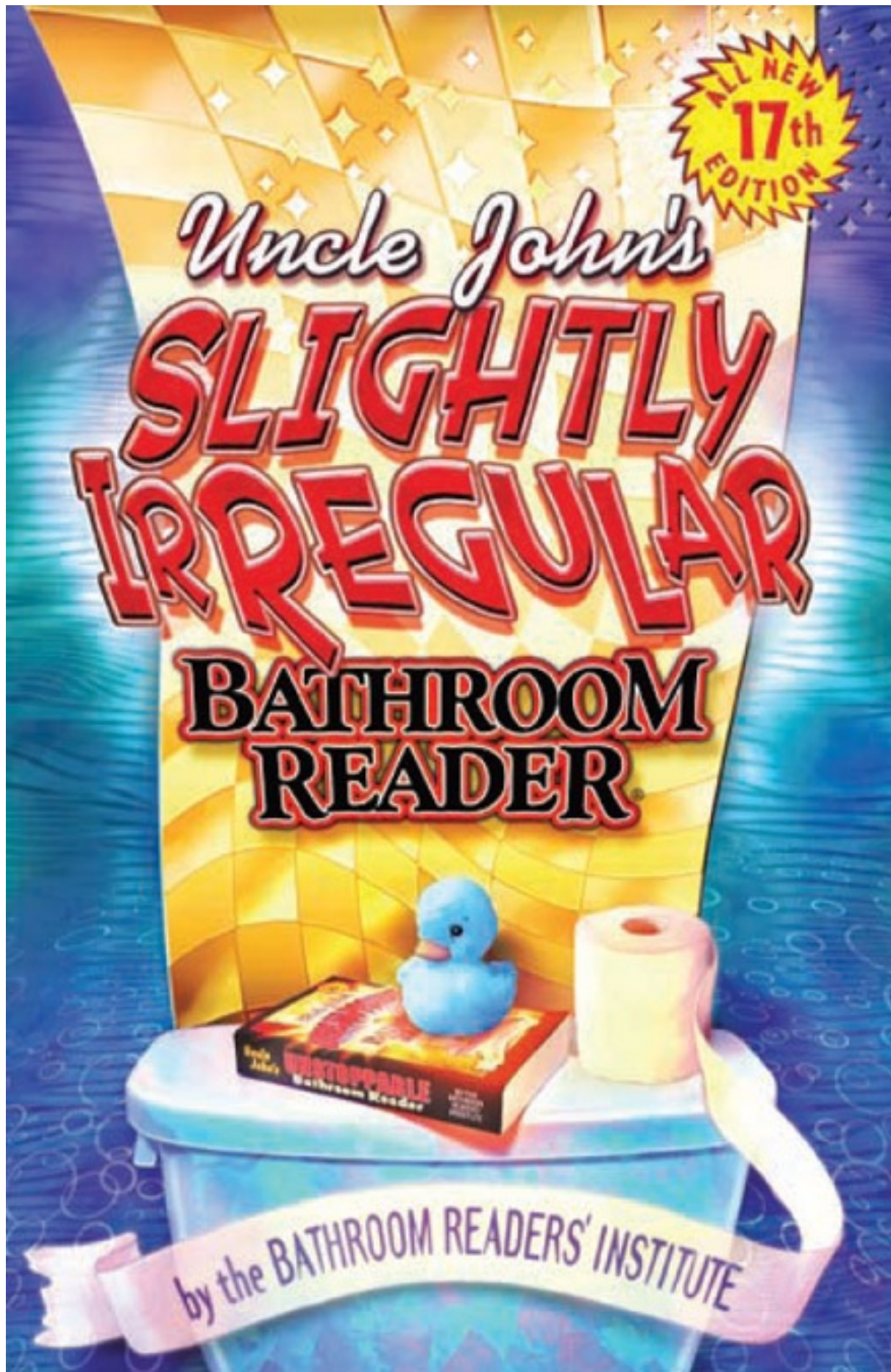


Uncle John's Slightly Irregular Bathroom Reader

Bathroom Readers' Institute



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Uncle John's
SLIGHTLY
IRREGULAR
BATHROOM
READER

By the
Bathroom Readers'
Institute

Bathroom Readers' Press
Ashland, Oregon

OUR “REGULAR” READERS RAVE!

“This is one of the best books I’ve ever read. What are the other best books I’ve read? Why, the other *Uncle John’s Bathroom Readers*, of course! Thanks—you make doing #2 my #1 priority!”

—**Robert D.**

“I found nirvana when I found your books. Thank you, thank you, thank you.”

—**Donna K.**

“This is just a note to thank you for the valuable knowledge that you have dumped on me. You have given me great pleasure and kept me quite regular. My wife also thanks you, for since our introduction to the world of the *Bathroom Reader*, I had to build her a second bathroom. Humble thanks and keep up the good work.”

—**James M.**

“I started reading your books after a colleague, ordinarily not much of a conversationalist, started to get smarter and smarter by the day. We couldn’t figure out what was going on until we caught him reading one of your books. I bought my first one that night.”

—**Ernie P.**

“You guys are the best. My girlfriend thinks I spend too much time in the can, but I just tell her that I am improving my cognitive thinking and am full of information, not what I’m usually full of.”

—**Marty M.**

“I’m a huge fan of *Bathroom Readers*, but they are *too* good. Everytime someone sees me with one of your books, they ask to see it, read it, then borrow it. The bad part is I never get them back. Keep on flushin’!”

—**Ted C.**

“I just purchased my 16th *Bathroom Reader* and will not stop until I own every one. You have given me many days and nights of enjoyable reading. I look forward to future editions. Keep up the good work!”

—**Karyn L.**

UNCLE JOHN'S SLIGHTLY IRREGULAR BATHROOM READER®

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Created in the United States of America

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"Seattle Windshield Pitting Epidemic" by Alan J. Stein for History Link.
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Hiya Sophie! Hiya Jessie!

THANK YOU!

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Rich Skrenta
Porter the Wonder Dog
John Javna
Thomas Crapper

* * *

...AND BEST FLUSHES
to the millions of bathroom readers out there.

“Doing nothing is very hard to do...you never know when you’re finished.” —Leslie Nielsen

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* **Extended**—for those leg-numbing experiences

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* * *

Oops! A popular British hiking magazine had to apologize to its readers. Its February 2004 issue contained faulty directions for how to get down safely from Ben Nevis, the country's highest peak. As printed, the route led hikers over the edge of a cliff.

HERE WE GO AGAIN!

Another year...another amazing *Bathroom Reader*.

Why do we keep doing this? Two reasons: 1) We love learning new things; and 2) We love sharing what we've learned. We just can't help it. For instance, did you know that the world's safest mode of transportation is...the elevator? See? The urge is still uncontrollable—even after 16 years!

On our quest for perfect bathroom reading, we tried to shake things up a bit this year: Instead of writing about dumb crooks, we decided to find some smart crooks. We couldn't find any. So we settled for nice crooks, like the guy who handed a bank teller a robbery note that ended with "Sorry for your inconvenience."

We also came up with a few new wordplay pages. We have a crazy word game based on Fed chairman Alan Greenspan, and our regular page of palindromes turned into a three-page sci-fi epic of absurd proportions. (Speaking of palindromes, we discovered a town called Adaven, Nevada.)

And why settle for the best when the worst is a lot funnier? We have a bunch of worsts, including the world's worst novelist and two terrible poets (one of whom only writes about cheese).

This book truly is...slightly irregular.

But wait, there's more. (Okay, you can stop waiting.) Even with the few new touches, this is still a bona fide classic *Bathroom Reader*. It runs the gamut from the useless (Michael Jackson has a pet llama named Louie) to the useful (how to get out of a speeding ticket) to the sublime (our "Creative Teaching" award to the guy who punishes his students by making them listen to Frank Sinatra) to the very core of what makes us who we are ("The History of Civilization" begins on [page 110](#)). We also answer some of life's nagging questions, such as, "How come so much stuff is made in China?" and "How do you kill a zombie?"

As always, these books would never make it to press were it not for the committed (they should be) staff at BRI headquarters in Ashland, Oregon.

- Thanks to our writers, John D. (check out his harrowing tale of "The Gimli Glider," perhaps the most nail-biting story we've ever told) and Little Thom (he gave us "The History of Civilization" and "Forgotten Founding Father").
- Then there's Brian, who knows far too much about pop culture and proves it with his great article about the lost *Star Wars* movie. And we can't forget Ol' Jay, who left the BRI, but somehow still shows up every day...and one day he showed up with a terrific piece on Woodstock.
- Laura does a bit of everything, from answering the mail, to revamping our store, to writing about Jackie Chan's most brutal injuries. Thanks to John G. for his typesetting prowess and creative eye (and to Jeff for helping during crunch time!). And thanks to

Rain for filling all of our customer orders with a smile.

- Sam came to Ashland, said “Whassup?” wrote some articles (“Upstanding Citizens,” for instance), then said “Later,” and flew back to New York City. Who was that masked man?
- Special props: to Michael B., the world’s best (and most patient) cover designer; to Angie, who provided hundreds of great running feet (including Uncle John’s new favorite: “This page is about 500,000 atoms thick”); to the Godfather, Allen Orso; to Jenny Baldwin and Paul Stanley, our cohorts at Banta; and to our copyeditor, Sharilyn (Weer verry sad two sea you goe., but dont wurry—weel bee just find).
- Holding it all together is our production manager, Julia, whose grace and perseverance make our lives a whole lot easier.
- Thank you to Mrs. Uncle John from the BRI for sparing your wonderful husband for most of the summer and fall so we could get this book done. You can have him back now. (He may need a nap.)
- And last, but most, thank you to our dedicated readers. You’re a part of our family, too. See you next year.

And in the meantime,

Go with the Flow!

—Uncle John, the BRI staff, and Porter the Wonder Dog

YOU'RE MY INSPIRATION

*It's always interesting to find out where the architects of pop culture get their ideas.
These may surprise you.*

SUPER MARIO BROTHERS. Mario, the Italian-American plumber in dozens of Nintendo video games, was modeled after the landlord at Nintendo's New York offices in the 1970s.

GOLLUM. Actor Andy Serkis provided the voice and movements for the character in the *Lord of the Rings* films. He based the voice on the sound of his cat coughing up a hairball. Special effects artists modeled Gollum's wiry, bony frame on punk rocker Iggy Pop.

"SMOKE ON THE WATER." In 1971 the band Deep Purple was about to perform at a casino in Montreux, Switzerland. Just before they went on, a fan fired a flare gun into the crowd (the opening act, Frank Zappa, was performing). The casino burned to the ground, spreading huge plumes of smoke across Lake Geneva. The image stuck with the band and inspired the classic rock song.

NBA LOGO. The National Basketball Association's logo is red and blue with the white silhouette of a player dribbling a ball. The model: 1960s Los Angeles Lakers star Jerry West.

TAXI DRIVER (1976). Paul Schrader created Robert De Niro's creepy Travis Bickle character after reading the published diaries of Arthur Bremer, the man convicted of trying to assassinate presidential candidate George Wallace in 1972. In turn, John Hinckley, Jr. claims *Taxi Driver* inspired his attempt to murder President Reagan.

COLUMBIA PICTURES LOGO. The woman in a toga holding a torch aloft is not based on the Statue of Liberty. The model for the logo—used since 1925—was Evelyn Venable, a bit player at Columbia.

AMERICAN FLAG BUMPER STICKERS. Peter Fonda got the idea to use American flags to decorate the motorcycle he rode in his 1969 film, *Easy Rider*, from John Wayne's flag-emblazoned jacket in *Flying Tigers* (1942). But when Fonda rode the motorcycle through Los Angeles, police stopped him for *desecrating* the flag. "By 1970," says Fonda, "every cop car had a flag on its fender."

Princess Diana's favorite band was Duran Duran.

COURT TRANSQUIPS

The verdict is in! These real-life courtroom exchanges make some of the best bathroom reading there is. These were actually said in court, and recorded word for word.

Q: Do you recall telling the police that you passed out at that time?

A: I passed out, yes. I passed out. I think I blacked out. I passed out, but I don't know if I was really out. I just remember blacking out, and I assume I passed out. If I didn't pass out, maybe just my mind blacked out.

Judge: Had you been drinking that day? Alcohol, I mean?

Defendant: Uh-huh.

Judge: Had you?

Lawyer: Answer it audibly.

Judge: Had you been drinking alcohol that day?

Defendant: Audibly.

Lawyer: Do you now wear corrective glasses?

Witness: There are three of you?

Judge: How do you plead, guilty or not guilty?

Defendant: I'm guilty as hell.

Judge: Let the record reflect the defendant is guilty as hell.

Lawyer: Officer, at this point in your mind, did you consider him to be a suspect in the homicide?

Officer: No. I really did not have enough intelligence to make that decision.

Q: I take it you helped milk the cows?

A: I milked them.

Q: Did you help with breeding at all?

A: The bulls did the breeding. I couldn't do that.

Lawyer: When you said that, there was some hesitation. Have you heard of others that you haven't heard about yet?

Q: So you don't recall the exact distance?

A: That he was from me? Or I was from him?

Lawyer: What about the research?

Witness: I don't think there is any research on that. There's a logical hunch that may be true, but I know of no research study that would support that.

Lawyer: What about just common sense?

Witness: Well, I am not here using common sense. I'm here as an expert.

Lawyer: Now, Doctor, which way would someone fall after receiving a twelve-gauge shotgun blast directly in the chest?