

THE POOP BIBLE



A CURIOUS HISTORY
OF HUMANITY'S
MOST UNIVERSAL ACT



EDWIN HOWARD GIDEON

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A LITTLE TASTE OF HISTORY

A Free Preview

History has always been messier than it cares to remember.

The pages that follow hold five true stories from *The Poop Bible*.
Each one is strange, occasionally ridiculous, and firmly part of
the historical record.

Enjoy.



*This book was made to be read in spreads: each tale on one page, its
engraving on the page facing it. The preview keeps that
arrangement, so it reads best with your screen turned sideways.*

The Poop Knife Experiment

Anthropologist Wade Davis recorded a story about an Inuit man who survived a winter by carving a knife from his own frozen feces, using it to butcher a dog, and leaving on a sled made from the animal's ribcage.

In 2019, researchers at Kent State University decided to test whether such a knife could actually work.

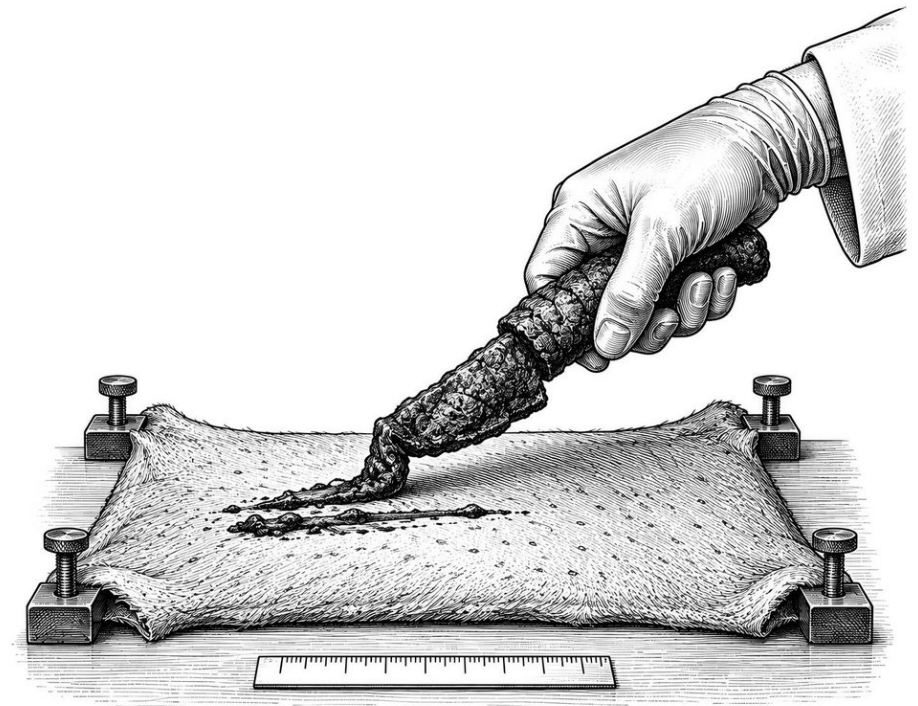
One researcher spent eight days eating a high-protein Arctic-style diet. The resulting feces were shaped into knives by hand and in ceramic molds, frozen to minus twenty degrees Celsius, and sharpened with a metal file.

The blades became hard enough to hold a sharp edge.

When tested on pig hide, however, they softened on contact and left only a brown streak.

A second knife produced the same result.

Eren et al., Journal of Archaeological Science: Reports (2019)



The Viking Turd Worth £20,000

In 1972, archaeologists excavating beneath a Lloyds Bank site in York found an unusually well-preserved human stool in Viking-age soil.

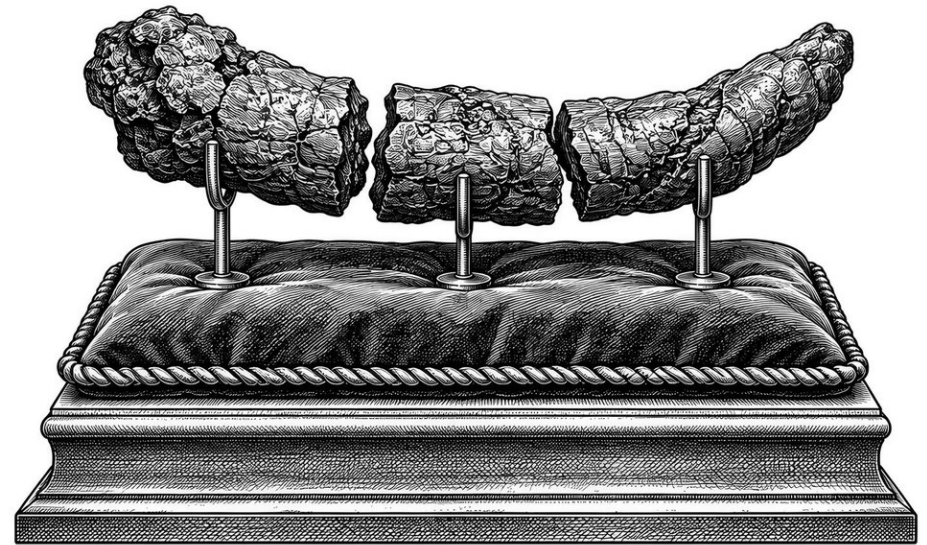
At around twenty centimeters long, it is one of the largest complete pieces of ancient human feces ever found.

Inside were cereal remains and hundreds of parasite eggs. Its owner had been infected with both whipworms and roundworms, giving archaeologists evidence not only of what people in Viking York ate, but of what was living inside them.

The specimen became known as the Lloyds Bank Coprolite. It was later valued for insurance purposes at £20,000, about US\$34,000 at the time.

In 2003, during a visit by a school group, its display stand was accidentally knocked over. The thousand-year-old coprolite hit the floor and broke into three pieces.

Museum conservators were able to reconstruct it, and it remains part of the collection today.



Hall, The Viking Dig (1984); Jeffery, The Guardian (2003)

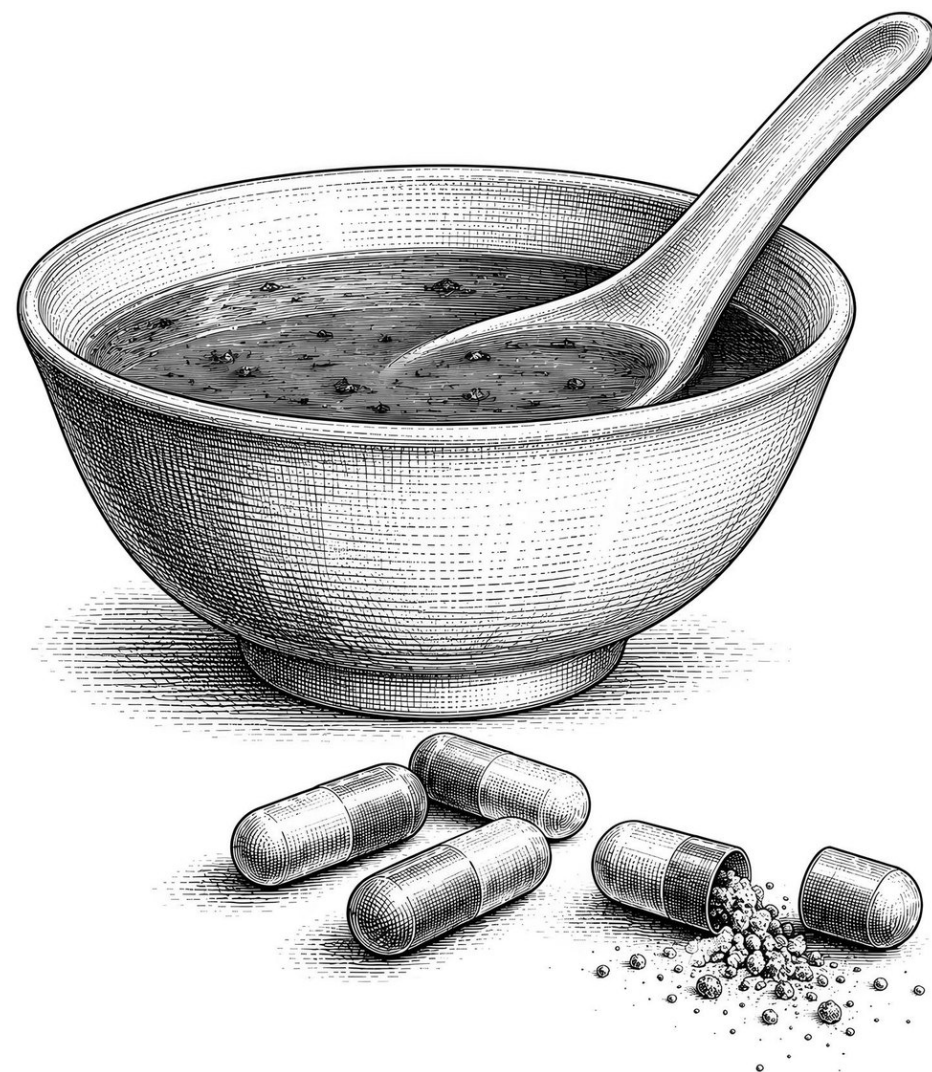
Doctors Have Prescribed Human Feces for Over 1,700 Years

Around the fourth century AD, the Chinese physician Ge Hong described treating severe diarrhea and food poisoning with a suspension made from human feces and taken by mouth. It became known as “yellow soup.”

Modern medicine returned to the same basic idea: fecal microbiota transplantation transfers gut microbes from a screened healthy donor into a patient and is particularly effective against recurrent *Clostridioides difficile*, outperforming antibiotic treatment alone in clinical trials.

In 2023, the FDA approved Vowst, the first orally administered fecal microbiota product.

Zhang et al., Am J Gastroenterol (2012); van Nood et al., NEJM (2013); FDA (2023)



The Space Poop Challenge

In an emergency, astronauts may have to remain sealed inside a pressurized spacesuit for days. The absorbent garments normally worn inside suits are only suitable for short periods.

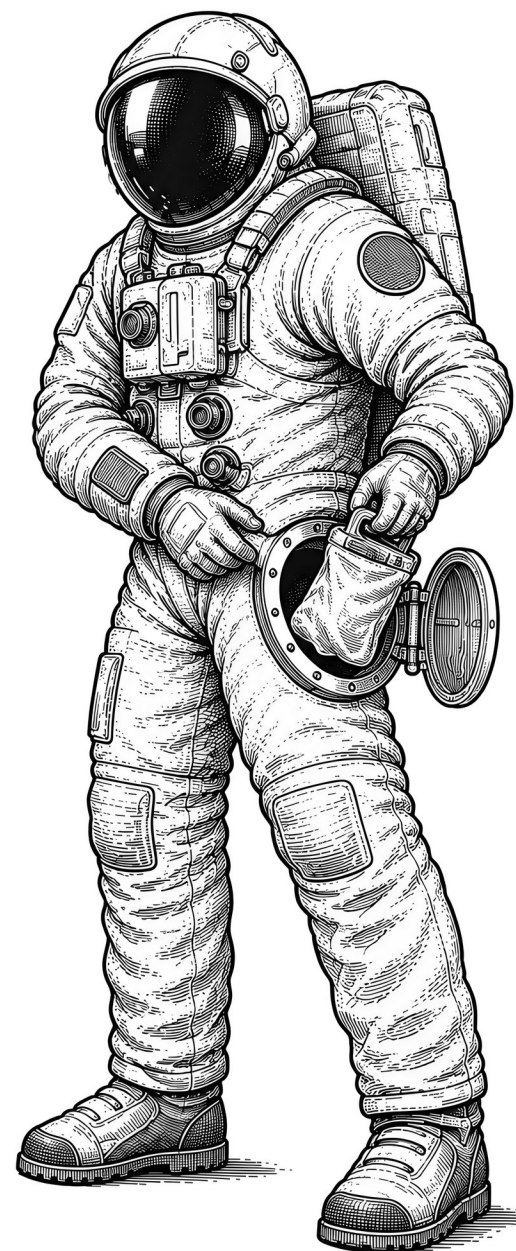
In 2016, NASA opened the problem to the public. The Space Poop Challenge asked for a system that could manage urine, feces and menstrual fluid inside a spacesuit for up to 144 hours, without using the astronaut's hands. A total of \$30,000 in prizes was offered.

The challenge received 5,170 submissions from more than 20,000 participants.

First place went to US Air Force flight surgeon Thatcher Cardon. His design added a small valved opening at the crotch of the suit, allowing different toileting tools to be passed through without losing pressure.

Cardon based the idea on laparoscopic surgery, where instruments are passed through small sealed openings while the surrounding system remains closed.

NASA / HeroX Space Poop Challenge, 2016



The Dog Poop DNA Company

In 2008, a genetics laboratory in Tennessee came up with a new use for canine DNA: identifying dogs whose owners left their waste behind.

The system is now known as PooPrints. When a dog moves into a participating apartment complex, its cheek is swabbed and its DNA profile is added to a database. Waste found later on the property can be sent to the laboratory and matched back to the registered dog.

A match can identify the dog, its owner and apartment, allowing the property manager to issue a fine.

What began as a niche service has become a sizeable business. PooPrints says its system is now used in more than 10,000 communities and has registered over one million dogs, with operations concentrated in the United States, Canada, Mexico and the United Kingdom.

PooPrints / BioPet Laboratories



WHAT DID YOU THINK?

Which of these five stories
surprised you the most?

*I'd genuinely love to hear your thoughts.
Even a sentence or two would mean a lot.*

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Click the address to open a new email.



Thank you for reading.

— Edwin Howard Gideon

*50 bizarre but true stories. One extraordinary book.
The complete edition of The Poop Bible is available on Amazon.*