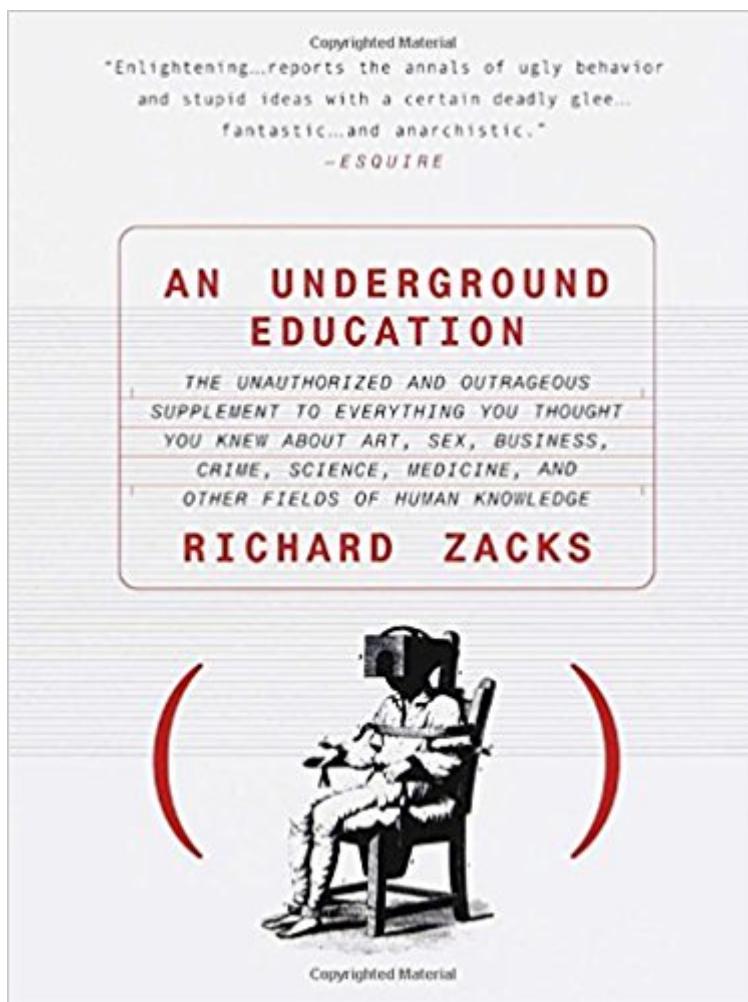


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# An Underground Education: The Unauthorized And Outrageous Supplement To Everything You Thought You Knew Out Art, Sex, Business, Crime, Science, Medicine, And Other Fields Of Human





## Synopsis

The best kind of knowledge is uncommon knowledge. Okay, so maybe you know all the stuff you're supposed to know--that there are teenier things than atoms, that Remembrance of Things Past has something to do with a perfumed cookie, that the Monroe Doctrine means we get to take over small South American countries when we feel like it.Â Â Â But really, is this kind of knowledge going to make you the hit of the cocktail party, or the loser spending forty-five minutes examining the host's bookshelves? Wouldn't you rather learn things like how the invention of the bicycle affected the evolution of underwear?Â Â Â Or that the 1949 Nobel Prize for Medicine was awarded to a doctor who performed lobotomies with a household ice pick?Â Â Â Or how Catherine the Great really died?Â Â Â Or that heroin was sold over the counter not too long ago? For the truly well-rounded "intellectual," nothing fascinates so much as the subversive, the contrarian, the suppressed, and the bizarre.Â Â Â Richard Zacks, auto-didact extraordinaire, has unleashed his admittedly strange mind and astonishing research abilities upon the entire spectrum of human knowledge, ferreting out endlessly fascinating facts, stories, photos, and images guaranteed to make you laugh, gasp in wonder, and occasionally shudder at the depths of human depravity.Â Â Â The result of his labors is this fantastically illustrated quasi-encyclopedia that provides alternative takes on art, business, crime, science, medicine, sex (lots of that), and many other facets of human experience. Immensely entertaining, and arguably enlightening, *An Underground Education* is the only book that explains the birth of motion pictures using photos of naked baseball players. Richard Zacks is the author of *History Laid Bare: Love, Sex and Perversity from the Ancient Etruscans to Warren G. Harding*, which was excerpted in classy magazines like Harper's and earned the attention of the even classier New York Times, which noted that "Zacks specializes in the raunchy and perverse."Â Â Â The Georgia State Legislature voted on whether to ban the book from public libraries.Â Â Â He has studied Arabic, Greek, Latin, French, Italian, and Hebrew, and received the Phillips Classical Greek Award at the University of Michigan.Â Â Â He has also told his publisher that he made a living in Cairo cheating royalty from a certain Arab country at games of chance, although the claim remains unverified.Â Â Â His writing has appeared in the New York Times, The Atlantic Monthly, Time, Life, Sports Illustrated, The Village Voice, TV Guide, and similarly diverse publications.Â Â Â Zacks is married and busy warping the minds of his two children, Georgia and Ziegfeld.Â Â Â He resides in New York City, and can be reached via e-mail at [rzacks@echonyc.com](mailto:rzacks@echonyc.com). From the Hardcover edition.

## Book Information

Paperback: 432 pages

Publisher: Anchor; 1st Anchor Books Ed edition (April 20, 1999)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0385483767

ISBN-13: 978-0385483766

Product Dimensions: 7.1 x 1.1 x 9.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.3 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 stars 113 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #303,407 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #28 in Books > Reference > Encyclopedias & Subject Guides > Humor #93 in Books > Humor & Entertainment > Humor > Doctors & Medicine #220 in Books > Humor & Entertainment > Trivia & Fun Facts

## **Customer Reviews**

Forget the history you were taught in school; Richard Zacks's version is crueler and funnier than anything you might have learned in seventh-grade civics--and much more of a gross-out, too.

Described on the book jacket as an "autodidact extraordinaire," Zacks is also the author of History Laid Bare, making him something of an expert guide through history's back alleys and side streets.

There's no fact too seamy or perverse for Zacks to drag out into the light of day, from matters scatological and sexual to some of history's most truly bizarre episodes. Curious about ancient nose-blowing etiquette? What about the sexual proclivities of Catherine the Great? Throughout chapters such as "The Evolution of Underwear" and "Dentistry Before Novocaine," Zacks proves a tireless debunker of popular myths as well as a muckraker par excellence. --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

Astonishing facts!Bizarre photographs!Fascinating & sometimes deeply weird true stories!Just a small taste of the intellectual smorgasbord contained in this volume.Did you know:that in the original story of Goldilocks the bears torture and kill their impolite visitor?that Pope Leo XIII appeared in an advertisement for cocaine-laced wine in the 1880s?that people didn't eat with forks until the 1700s?that Sir Isaac Newton's famous humble-pie quote "If I have seen further, it is by standing on the shoulders of giants" was actually written to a dwarf scientist named Robert Hooke and clearly meant as an insult?that Thomas Edison secretly helped develop the electric chair in a scheme to have the lethal machine named after his arch-rival, George Westinghouse?that the first pediatric guide written in the United States recommended that expectant mothers breastfeed puppies?that for

two centuries French scientists obsessively experimented on freshly decapitated heads in an effort to discover whether the headless brain still functioned?that Cleopatra was ugly as sin?From the Hardcover edition.

I am a big fan of this book and had lost it years ago - lost to a person who had to have it without my permission - I have now just reunited with my favorite book . Its a good bathroom reader and is incredible in research of facts in its pages - it will make you think and thank your life you are not a statistic in its content of information in most of the areas its shocking to the mind . Also its an addition to random subjects & what we dont normally learn of them in class . The book is for good argument in a church brawl at bible school too !!!! That is just the one chapter that is on religion example - to fill up those sunday services in church could never get boring just Bring this bible thumper Stumper for a good many years your new questions to its content , will open a new and shocking history of gods people .....

I had hoped for more intriguing views or insights. Instead, I read a lot of stories with a focus it seems on sex, almost pornography, religion. Most of these stories, for those that are interested in history, you already know, so if you are into history from the unreported viewpoint this book is no eye opener and kind of slow. If you are a first timer to history from this perspective then it is a good read, but be prepared to be bored by re-treading sex stories and scandals, religious oddities. Bottom line, should have been printed in bullet form, would make a better collection of short stories on historical myths.

Real history presented in bite-sized gems. All the fun that mainstream history conveniently ignores. People have had to deal with the same things (sex, death, bad medicine, political corruption, etc etc.) regardless of time and place. And a great bibliography provides a source of even more fun.

Excellent reading materialFun, taboo, interesting stories and historical anecdotes. I bought a second copy and gave it as a gift to a friend with a keen interest in the bizarre.

Very cool book! I love this book. Twisted and odd and I love it! So much obscure and interesting information. I have given this book to several people and they all love it as well!

Was recommended this book by a friend. I bought it for the chapter on the Grimm's Fairy Tales, but

it's so much more. The title is the perfect description for this book, it's the best companion to anyone's education. Some stuff I already knew, but for the most part I couldn't put this book down. It's both educational and funny, and stays interesting. My copy is currently circulating through my circle of friends, great book to keep on your shelf too, company's always picking it up and flipping through it. I recommend this book to everyone!

I stumbled on this book looking for something else. Never heard of it before, but after reading reviews about it I decided I had to have it. I couldn't find it in the local library to check out to see if I wanted it. So I just poked around til I found a good deal and bought the hardbound addition straight out. The reviews on here and on google fairly well described it. I AM NOT DISAPPOINTED. It is a collectors item.

love it but I bought it for a friend for Christmas

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