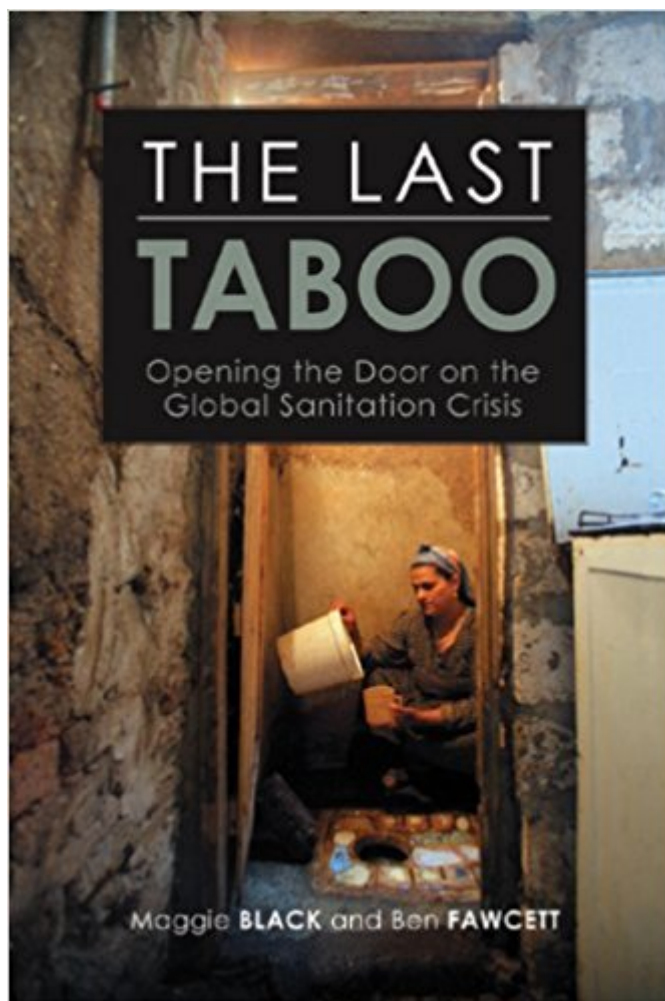


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# The Last Taboo: Opening The Door On The Global Sanitation Crisis



## Synopsis

Except in schoolboy jokes, the subject of human waste is rarely aired. We talk about 'water-related' diseases when most are sanitation-related - in short, we don't mention the shit. A century and a half ago, a long, hot summer reduced the Thames flowing past the UK Houses of Parliament to a 'Great Stink', thereby inducing MPs to legislate sanitary reform. Today, another sanitary reformation is needed, one that manages to spread cheaper and simpler systems to people everywhere. In the byways of the developing world, much is quietly happening on the excretory frontier. In 2008, the International Year of Sanitation, the authors bring this awkward subject to a wider audience than the world of international filth usually commands. They seek the elimination of the 'Great Distaste' so that people without political clout or economic muscle can claim their right to a dignified and hygienic place to go. Published with UNICEF

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Maggie Black has written several books on water, sanitation and development such as *The No-Nonsense Guide to International Development* (New Internationalist, 2007). Ben Fawcett is an environmental health engineer and was until recently a lecturer at the University of Southampton, UK.

'The authors truly deserve credit for bringing out into the open a subject we instinctively avoid.' HRH Prince Willem-Alexander of the Netherlands, Chairperson, UN Secretary General's Advisory Board

on Water and Sanitation 'There are many untold and fascinating stories in the world of sanitation. This book tells these stories like they have never been told before, drawing them together into the epic tale of how poor communities are battling to clean up their neighbourhoods, sometimes with help from dedicated professionals, often against all odds.' Sandy Cairncross, Professor of Environmental Health, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine 'The authors of this book bring out of the shadows an unmentionable subject, and call for a new sanitary revolution - on behalf of the environment and people's dignity. I endorse their call, and recommend this book for spelling out the urgency of the crisis.' Sunita Narain, Director, Centre for Science and Environment, New Delhi 'This book is highly readable, exhaustively informative, and will be of considerable help to those trying to adapt and redesign toilet technologies for local conditions. Its multifaceted approach has important implications for attaining the Millennium Development Goal for sanitation.' Bindeshwar Pathak, Founder, Sulabh International Social Service Organisation 'The lack of sanitation endured by 2.6 billion people is a hidden international scandal. It is the principal reason for the spread of diarrhoeal diseases and the toll they take on human lives. This book makes us think about these things, and does so with great power. The authors truly deserve credit for bringing out into the open a subject we instinctively avoid.' HRH Prince Willem-Alexander of the Netherlands, Chairperson, UN Secretary General's Advisory Board on Water and Sanitation

An interesting book for those committed with sanitation. An interesting book for those committed with sanitation. An interesting book for those committed with sanitation

then don't read this one. Instead, read "The Big Necessity" (2008) by Rose George, which is a much breezier and exciting account of the global sanitation crisis. If, on the other hand, you plan on reading more than one book on sanitation (if, for example, you want to/already work in the sector), then this book provides a lot more detail and case studies than George's book does and I recommend reading it next, though, as a result, it reads much more like a textbook (while George's reads like a gripping action novel). Don't get me wrong - this is an interesting and fulfilling book for someone like me, but may be a bit dry or technical for someone who is simply interested in getting inspired or interested in the field more generally.

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