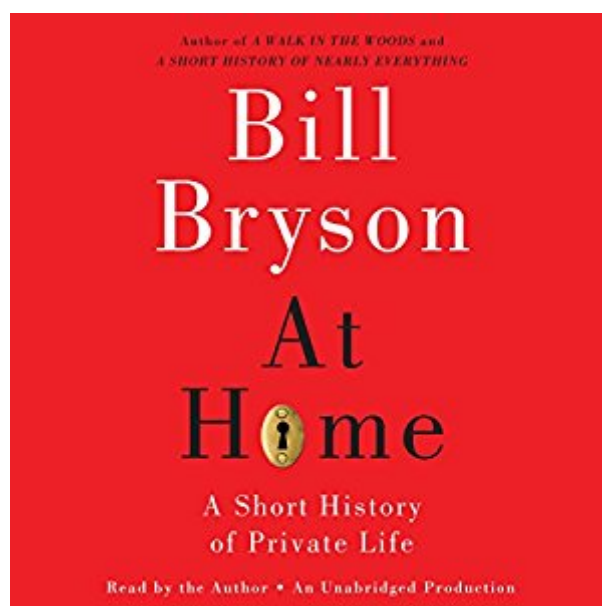


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At Home: A Short History Of Private Life



Synopsis

From one of the most beloved authors of our time-more than six million copies of his books have been sold in this country alone - a fascinating excursion into the history behind the place we call home. "Houses aren't refuges from history. They are where history ends up." Bill Bryson and his family live in a Victorian parsonage in a part of England where nothing of any great significance has happened since the Romans decamped. Yet one day, he began to consider how very little he knew about the ordinary things of life as he found it in that comfortable home. To remedy this, he formed the idea of journeying about his house from room to room to "write a history of the world without leaving home." The bathroom provides the occasion for a history of hygiene; the bedroom, sex, death, and sleep; the kitchen, nutrition and the spice trade; and so on, as Bryson shows how each has figured in the evolution of private life. Whatever happens in the world, he demonstrates, ends up in our house, in the paint and the pipes and the pillows and every item of furniture. Bill Bryson has one of the liveliest, most inquisitive minds on the planet, and he is a master at turning the seemingly isolated or mundane fact into an occasion for the most diverting exposition imaginable. His wit and sheer prose fluency make *At Home* one of the most entertaining books ever written about private life.

Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

Listening Length: 16 hours and 38 minutes

Program Type: Audiobook

Version: Unabridged

Publisher: Random House Audio

Audible.com Release Date: October 5, 2010

Language: English

ASIN: B0045XYQAS

Best Sellers Rank: #1 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > Arts & Entertainment > Architecture
#6 in Books > Arts & Photography > Architecture > Buildings > Residential #24 in Books > Crafts, Hobbies & Home > Home Improvement & Design > How-to & Home Improvements > Design & Construction

Customer Reviews

I am really enjoying this book though I find I am forgetting what I've read almost as soon as I have read it! That is because there is SO much information in here! I enjoy Mr. Bryson's writing, it is like

listening to a charming and well read friend. If ind I prefer to own his books (rather than borrow from the library) so that I can jump in and out of the conversation or refer back to them. This one in particular is crammed full of the intriguing histories of all sorts of unnoticed daily spaces and objects. I feel as if I know my ancestors better after reading and therefore know myself a bit more. Quite a nice book if you like this sort of thing!

Bill Bryson makes history very accessible with this easy-to-read and beautifully illustrated book. Ever wonder about the evolution of the modern home? This is your book! Bryson takes us through every room and thoroughly explains how they developed from the simple, one-room huts of our ancestors to the multi-room, multi-story homes of today. Everything about every room is delved into, from plumbing fixtures and appliances to tines on forks and table manners.

Bill Bryson never disappoints and this book is no exception. I read it several years ago, recommending it to everyone I knew. Such fascinating material for him to work with and he works with all material so well. When I saw it was available in an audio book I decided to buy it for an upcoming drive from Florida to New England. We enjoyed it very much. Nothing personal to the author but I know he's an American so I did find his British "ness" terminology a bit annoying. Having lived overseas for many years and knowing many people taught in British English, I full well know how easy it is to pick up their interesting terminology, still I found it somewhat difficult to put up with coming from a mostly American accent. . Overall though I enjoyed the audio version and I recommend it and the book itself highly.

Bryson hits another out of the park. Information about our homes that is very interesting and mostly unknown in today's world. It is guaranteed that you will learn things about our homes that you did not know.

This very well written book takes the reader on a journey through history using the metaphor of home and domesticity. While the topics and figures encountered range in time, scale, and scope, taken together they paint a comprehensive picture of the amazing changes that occurred during the 19th century. As a reader, I was reminded of things I'd learned before and inspired to research more about new ones.

I love reading books, I have a ritualistic approach. I have certain times of day when I either sit down

with a cup of tea in the back yard or when I go to bed, I love to finish my day with a read. It relaxes me. But I did find that, oddly, I wasn't quite as enthused as I have been with his others. I have been a fan since I read my first, 'Notes From a Small Island'. I gave this book four stars because of that. In truth though I would love to give it 4 1/2. It is still a great and very entertaining read, The authors dry humour spills through the chapters and his details are fascinating for a trivia obsessive like myself. I still recommend it as his four and a half stars would be well above most other writers of this ilk.

I am a big fan of everything Bill Bryson has written and this book was no exception. He can make anything interesting and funny. This is a look at our homes and how they have taken on the form they have today. In the process he discusses the history of all sorts of mundane things that become fascinating facts under the pen of Mr. Bryson. One of the weirder things I remember is the idea of how many people are buried in the average English churchyard. It's an incredibly large number. How burying all these people has raised the earth up many feet over hundreds and hundreds of years. Its macabre but you have to admit that's pretty interesting. I don't remember how this fit into the story of the home, but then that's often the way his books are.

I had originally checked this book out of the library. I loved it so much that I wanted it for my small library. It has the most incredible history and background on the development of homes. I never even thought about some of the concepts regarding the abodes we live in. This book along with others that the author has written are a must have for those who are curious about why, when, where, how come and the history of. Did you know that a hall used to be the entire living area and all on one floor. Learn when second stories were built, the invention of the fireplace and chimneys and wall paper used to contain so much arsenic that it kept the house bed bug free. Find out who some of the inventors were and how events in politics, the economy, the arts and sciences influenced the various building materials. Did you know that glass (windows) used to be taxed. Hence the reason that the lower income people had virtually no windows. I was fascinated about how the use of salt and pepper shakers came about. There are some many facts that I can only scratch the surface in this review.

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