

“This Monster Is in My House”

Monster. From the Latin, *monstrare*, to show. Closely associated with *monere*, to warn.

1. Something extraordinary or unnatural; a prodigy, a marvel (obsolete).
2. An animal or plant deviating in one or more of its parts from the normal type; an animal afflicted with some congenital malformation; a misshapen birth.
3. An imaginary animal having a form either partly brute and partly human (such as a centaur), or composed of elements from two or more animal forms.
4. A person of inhuman and horrible cruelty or wickedness.

(Oxford English Dictionary)

And the blood shall drop out of wood, and the stone shall give his voice, and the people shall be troubled. And the sea shall cast out fish, and make a noise in the night. And there shall be a confusion in many places, and the fire shall oft be sent out, and the wild beasts shall change their forms, and menstrous women shall bring forth monsters.

(2 Esdras 5: 5-9)

On The Causes of Monsters

There are thirteen things that cause monsters.

The first is the glory of God.

The second, His wrath.

The third, too great a quantity of seed.

The fourth, too little a quantity.

The fifth, the imagination.

The sixth, the narrowness of the womb.

“Much information may be gleaned from the shape and configuration of the head. In atavistic or degenerate people, we see heads that remind us of the apes or of man’s ancient forbears. A face of the Negroid type would warn us to look for greater size in certain organs; and a head with a receding chin and small facial angle would be an indication of weak mental development.”

Women sullied by menstrual blood will conceive monsters.

The seventh, an indecent posture of the mother, as when, being pregnant, she has sat too long with her legs crossed or pressed against her womb.

In the year 1569 a woman of Tours gave birth to two twin children having only one head.
(They were embracing each other.)

Monstrosities

The eighth, through a fall or blows struck against the womb.

The conclusion is that it is a filthy and brutish thing to have dealings with a woman while she is purging herself.

The ninth, through accidental illness.

The tenth, through rotten seed.

In the year 1546, in Paris, a woman who was six months pregnant gave birth to a child having two heads, four arms, and four legs.

The eleventh, through mixture or mingling of seed.

(Accordingly, I incised this child, finding inside it only one heart.)

Monstrosities

The twelfth, through the artifice of wicked spital beggars.

“The beginner should constantly train and exercise his powers of observation and summation; in trains and buses, in the street, and in all public places he should make a practice of rapidly and unobtrusively examining the heads and faces of people he meets, and of grouping them broadly in the various categories mentioned in this section.”

The thirteenth, through Demons and Devils.

(This monster, dry and dissected, is in my house.
I keep it as an example of a monstrous thing.)

The Sicke Womans Private Looking-Glasse

Indeed, the first departure into monstrosity is that the offspring should become female instead of male; this however is a natural necessity. (Aristotle, *De generatione animalium*)

The woman who will have conceived during her period will engender those inclined to leoprosy, scurvy, and gout, or subject to a thousand different diseases.

Monsters may also be procreated from the ardent and obstinate imagination of the mother at the moment of conception, or from corruption of the foul and filthy foods that women eat.

The cause of this is the very powerful imagination of the woman, moved by a vehement appetite or by the appearance or unexpected touching of this fruit.

All the more because the child conceived during the menstrual flow takes its nourishment and growth from blood that is contaminated, dirty, and corrupt.

For how many persons does one see who have on their face or other parts of the body the form of a cherry, plum, sorb-apple, fig, or mulberry?

Whereupon we will note in passing how dangerous it is to disturb a pregnant woman.

Monstrosities

Cleanliness has its price, or, rather, the right to be without odor is not without its costs.
(Dominique Laporte, *History of Shit*)

Always overnight maxis cover more of your panty than regular maxis, so you have less nighttime soiling. Plus, *Always* has a unique odor-absorbing layer that pulls moisture and odor away from you.

(Insert from a free sample of Always maxipads)

And when the midwives were about to receive the fruit and thought that the womb should open, there began to come out of the body of that girl iron nails, small pieces of wood and of glass, bones, stones and hair, tow and several other strange and filthy things, which the devil through his artifice had placed there.

Many animal forms are likewise created in women's wombs, such as frogs, toads, snakes, lizards, and harpies.

\$5.99

(Price of a package of Always overnight maxis.)

Monstrosities

She, being unmarried, played the naughty packe, and was gotten with childe. Which child, being a man-child, had first the mouth slitted on the right side, terrible to behold, having stumps on the handes, and the left leg growing upward toward the head, and the foote of the ryght leg growing into the buttocke of the sayd left leg.

Tampon. A plug, as of cotton, introduced into a cavity, usually to arrest hemorrhage or absorb secretions.

(Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary)

In the myddest of the backe there was a broade lump of flesh in fashion lyke a Rose, in the myddest wherof was a hole, which voyded like an Issue.

For which I'm expecting someone to object to me that I shouldn't have inserted anything like this into my book on reproduction. But I will answer him in a word, that I do not write for women at all. Let us return to our subject.

On the Lives of Monsters

It is not good that monsters should live among us.
(Ambrose Paré, *On Monsters and Marvels*)

One night, at work in the field, her head covering fell off and people screamed. 'I am so sorry. I am so ugly. I am as ugly as a snake. I am an ugly animal,' she said. She often called herself 'an ugly snake.'

The female, whose picture you see here (fig.1), lived twenty-five years, which is not natural for monsters, who ordinarily live scarcely any length of time at all because they grow displeased and melancholy at seeing themselves so repugnant to everyone, so that their life is brief.

This monster was born of a hostlers wife at Salisbury; two women-children perfectly made, joynd at the lower part of their bellies, and every part as perfect as two bodies. It was alive 24 hours, and cried and did as all hopeful children do; but by being shown too much to people, it was killed (fig. 2).

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I still offered Money for Permission to dissect the Monster, but the Parents' impertinent Superstition deprived me of that pleasure. (Daniel deSuperville, *Philosophical Transactions*, 1740)

John Grimes, a short and very thick strong man, has sold himself to a Surgeon, he being paid 6 pence a week to be dissected after his death.

James Byrne, a hunched and sickly man, was known as the "Irish Giant." His height was eight foot two in his stocking feet.

At the age of twenty one, Byrne put himself on display, having perhaps no other means to earn his livelihood.

"Irish Giant to be seen, in his large and elegant room. This and every day this week, admittance half a crown."

At one of his shows, Byrne was approached by a "resurrection man." The man, a dealer in cadavers, wanted to buy his bones.

"The giant stoops, is not well-shaped, his appearance far from wholesome. He is an ill-bred beast, though very young."

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(The man had been sent by John Hunter, a surgeon and researcher. Hunter was a collector of “curiosities” whose house was a private medical museum.

The yard itself was strewn with bones, both animal and human. The pool in Hunter’s garden was ringed with human skulls.)

Thereafter, the resurrection man appeared at every show. He would stand apart from the crowd, watching Byrne’s every move, fixing the giant with a baleful glare.

The rooms in Hunter’s house were overflowing with specimens: fossils, mummies, pickled babies, skeletons and cadavers. Strangely altered animals tottered about outside: pigs with lead in their leg bones, barnyard fowl with human teeth grafted to their combs.

Byrne was terrified by the resurrection man.

Hunter was not deterred by Byrne’s refusal.

(Schemes to obtain the giant’s corpse soon became a professional game, played by all of London’s anatomists.)

Monstrosities

Scared half out of his wits by the presence of the man, Byrne commissioned a coffin made of lead. A group of Irish boatmen pledged to row it out to sea, and to sink it far too deep to be recovered.

When the Byrne lay on his deathbed at the age of twenty-two, Hunter sat in an alehouse across the street.

When the giant breathed his last, Byrne's countrymen stripped his body, sinking in the coffin only his clothes.

Hunter wheeled the naked body through a tunnel beneath his house, to the catacomb that housed his laboratory.

(A group of medical students, on hearing the burial plan, at once began constructing a diving bell.)

He bought the Irish boatmen drinks and made offers for the body: fifty, a hundred, then five hundred pounds.

“Yesterday morning the body of Byrne, the famous Irish Giant, was carried to Margate to be thrown into the sea. This was agreeable to his own request, he having been apprehensive in life that surgeons would dissect him.”

(Report of Byrne's death appearing in
The Edinburgh *Evening Courant*)

Monstrosities

“No surgeon,” Hunter once told his students, “should approach his operation without reluctance and a sacred dread.”)

The bones, once reassembled, made “a splendid skeleton.” (No illustration is available.)

Within minutes, he had chopped the remains into pieces and boiled the flesh away from the bones in a kettle.

Both kettle and bones, the latter turned brown by intense heat, can still be seen in the Hunterian Museum of the Royal College of Surgeons in London.

The Hottentot Venus

Heere then see and bewaile the iniquity and irreligion of this our Age. The common sort make no further use of these Prodigies and Strange-births, than as a matter of wonder and table-talk, and looke upon them with none other eyes than those with which they would behold an African monster, a misshapen beast.

(Thomas Bedford, "Notes for a Sermon," 1635)

"Hottentots are the nearest approximation to the lower animals. Their complexion is a yellowish brown, compared by travellers to the peculiar hue of Europeans in the last stage of jaundice. The women, it is said, are even more repulsive in appearance than the men."

Saartjie Baartman, a South African domestic servant, arrived in London in 1810. She was a member of the Khoi-san people (designated "Hottentot" or "Bushman" by the Dutch). Upon her arrival in Europe, she immediately went on exhibition.

"Hottentot women have long flabby breasts; and they can suckle their children upon their backs by throwing the breasts over their shoulders."

Monstrosities

Saartjie was an intelligent woman who spoke several languages and had an excellent memory. Her name (pronounced Sar-key), was never used; instead she was billed and displayed as the "Hottentot Venus."

"Her movements have something brusque and capricious about them, which recall those of monkeys."

After a tour of the English provinces, Saartjie went to Paris, where an animal trainer exhibited her for fifteen months.

"During her stay in our capital, everyone was able to see her, and to verify the enormous protrusion of her buttocks, and the brutal appearance of her face."

(The equation of Bushman and animal had become so ingrained that one party of Dutch settlers, out on a hunting expedition, shot and ate a Bushman, assuming that he was the African equivalent of the Malay orangutan.)

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"We could verify that the protuberance of her buttocks had nothing muscular about it, but arose from a fatty mass of trembling and elastic consistence, situated immediately under her skin. It vibrated with all movements the woman made."

It was not only the shape of her buttocks that aroused interest. Reports had circulated for two centuries of a wondrous structure attached directly to the female genitalia of Khoi-San women and covering their private parts with a veil of skin, the so-called "curtain of shame." When Saartjie died of an inflammatory ailment on December 29, 1815, Georges Cuvier was determined to resolve this old question.

He preserved his skillful dissection of her genitalia and wrote with a flourish: "I have the honor to present to the Academy the genital organs of this woman prepared in a manner that leaves no doubt about the nature of her *tablier*."

Monstrosities

Thus, ascending the line of gradation, we come at last to the white European, who, being most removed from the brute creation, may be considered the most beautiful member of the human race.

(Charles White, surgeon and obstetrician, 1799)

At the Musée de l'Homme in Paris, on a shelf just above the brains are three jars, each containing female genitalia. The jars are labeled by race: *une négresse*, *une péruvienne*, and *la Vénus Hottentotte*.

Each object bears the seal of truth and at the bottom of each plate will be found its source, such as Cabinets and Collections, in such a way that everyone can be certain that these subjects actually exist.

We have done our best to smooth out the wrinkles produced by time, and these Monsters are shown, not in the state to which they would have been reduced by the passage of time, but as they appeared in life.

There are no brains of women, nor any male genitalia in the collection.

(By this means we have prevented the revulsion that arises at times in response to even the best-preserved subjects.)

Notes On the Preservation of Large Primates

Perhaps we should not speak of the ethnographic object but of the ethnographic fragment.
Like the ruin, the ethnographic fragment is informed by a poetics of detachment.

(Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, *Exhibiting Cultures*)

Weigh the specimen, if practicable.

Begin by taking the following measurements:

Length of the body (together with head);
greatest circumference of neck.

Length of arm from shoulder to elbow,
from elbow to wrist; circumference of the same.

Length of hand from fingers to wrist,
followed by width of the same.

Caroline Cramachi was called the Sicilian Fairy
a healthy, normal child except for size

exhibited in Bond Street in 1824
ten years old and nineteen inches tall

her forefingers measured less than an inch
“a powdery look to her skin”

”A most disgusting, withered little creature.”

Monstrosities

Length from knee to ankle; circumference of the same.

Length of foot from base of toes to heel and width of the same.

When measurements are complete, make opening incision.

Incise from neck to pelvis, along mid-line of back. Do not incise from breast to abdomen.

her feet were three inches long, her waist eleven and a quarter inches around

“those who handle Miss Crackham must pay another shilling.”

“I took her up, caressed, saluted her. It was most laughable to see her resent such freedoms-- wiping her cheek, expressing her dislike.”

While she was still alive, the Royal College of Surgeons “had offered, if any misfortune should occur

to cause the child’s death, to give 500 pounds for purposes of dissecting the remains.”

Monstrosities

Separate legs at pelvis; separate arms at shoulders.
Skin down the limbs as far as possible.

Disarticulate bones at knees and elbows.

Make a longitudinal incision under the surface
of each foot.

Incise hands, toes, and fingers. Remove all flesh.

If skeleton is required, remove all bones as well.

her parents had not had word of her
they learned of her death in the papers

Her father was given a ten-pound check
and an order to view the corpse.

(The dissection, evidently, was well advanced.)

“Only with difficulty was he persuaded to leave the room
the gentlemen present promising
nothing further would be done.”

Her skeleton is displayed at the Royal College of Surgeons,
in a glass case shared with the giant James Byrne.

Monstrosities

The
Bearded
Lady

The
Hottentot
Venus

The
Missing
Link

The
Alligator
Boy

The
What Is It?

The
Two-Headed
Nightingale

The
Dwarf

The
Irish Giant

The
Living
Skeleton

S

I

D

E

S

H

O

W

Monstrosities

Grace
Gilbert

Saartjie
Baartman

“Krao”

Name
Unknown

William
Henry
Johnson

Christine
& Millie
McKoy

Lia Graf

James
(or Charles?)
Byrne
(or O’Brien?)

Rosa Lee
Plemons

On Hermaphrodites or Androgynes

This Creature was 22 Years old when I saw it.
(James Blau DuPlessis, on seeing a hermaphrodite, c. 1680)

It will be difficult, no doubt, to get an exact idea of what my feelings were
in the midst of the extraordinary peculiarities of my life.
(Alexina Herculine Barbin, c. 1868)

Alexina, who is in her twenty-second year, has
brown hair. Her height is one meter fifty-nine
centimeters.

Her upper lip is covered by a light down; a few
hairs are to be observed on her cheeks, especially
the left one.

Menstruation has never occurred, to the great
despair of her mother. Her features remain
sexually indeterminate, being neither those of a
man nor those of a woman.

A constant preoccupation had seized hold of my
mind. I was devoured by the terrible sickness of
the unknown.

Although nobody would admit it to me, I was
aware that my condition was causing anxiety.
Science was unable to find an explanation for
a certain absence.

Monstrosities

Her voice is ordinarily that of a woman, but sometimes in conversation or when she coughs, heavy, masculine tones mingle with it.

Her upper limbs have nothing of the well-rounded shapes that characterize a well-formed woman; the suprapubic region is padded with very abundant black hair.

In daily contact with girls from fifteen to sixteen years old, she experienced emotions that she had difficulty in denying herself.

Her chest is that of a man; it is flat and without a trace of breasts. Her pelvis, her hips, are also those of a man.

During the summer, I constantly refused to go sea bathing with the other students. What stopped me from taking part in it? At the time I would not have been able to say.

A feeling of modesty, which I obeyed almost in spite of myself, compelled me to abstain.

People had at first admired the intimacy that had been established between Sara and myself, and then had criticized it.

Sara would sleep in the morning, her head resting on my arm. Her hair flowed gracefully over her naked shoulders. I would watch her thus, holding my breath, sunk in blissful contemplation.

Monstrosities

If her thighs are drawn apart, one perceives a longitudinal groove that reaches from the suprapubic eminence to the vicinity of the anus.

The apparent labia majora are in reality only two halves of a scrotum that remain divided.

By palpating them one plainly feels in each of them an ovoid body suspended from a spermatic cord. These two globular bodies are very sensitive to pressure.

To all appearances, it was the belated passage of the testicle through the abdominal ring that caused the sharp pains Alexina complained of.

Some time later I began to feel again the pains I had already suffered. They were more frequent now, more intense. Sara was worried, and went on insisting that I see a doctor.

Standing near my bed, the doctor considered me attentively, full of interest, while giving vent to muffled exclamations of this sort: "My God! Is it possible?"

Without explaining himself openly, the doctor urged Sara's mother to send me away from her house as quickly as possible, believing that he thus released himself from all responsibility.

Needless to say, the second examination had the same result as the first.

Monstrosities

Though I thrust my finger far up into the rectum, I could not make out a womb through the wall of the intestine.

After withdrawing the probe, I urged Alexina to urinate in my presence, which she did, making a vigorous jet that left the canal in a horizontal direction. But what are we to conclude from the above facts? Is Alexina a woman?

She has a vulva, labia, and feminine urethra, and a sort of imperforate penis, which might be a monstrously developed clitoris.

This little member, which, because of its dimensions, is as far removed from the clitoris as it is from the penis in its normal state, can, according to Alexina, swell, harden, and lengthen. Nonetheless, the erection of this imperfect penis must be very limited.

I shall excuse myself from entering here into the minute details of that examination.

The inevitable outcome, which I had foreseen, had desired even, terrified me now.

A kind of disgust seized hold of me. I did not calculate.

Monstrosities

We can now conclude and say: Alexina is a man, hermaphroditic no doubt, but with an obvious preponderance of masculine sexual characteristics.

Among the medicolegal questions that may be raised is one that concerns Alexina's fitness for marriage and reproduction.

Reproduction is the natural goal of marriage, and Alexina possesses the organs and functions that are characteristic of his sex.

Doctor H. had already prepared a voluminous report, intended to ensure before the courts a petition for rectification. I, who was raised until the age of twenty-one in religious houses, among shy female companions, was henceforth to belong to that half of the human race which is called the stronger sex.

Among those degraded women whose lips have brushed my own, there is doubtlessly not one of them who would not have shrunk back in shame under the pressure of my embraces, as from the touch of a reptile.

As a result of an exceptional situation, I have been granted the intimate understanding of all the secret facets of a woman's character. In marriage, I would abuse, perhaps, the immense advantages that would be mine. I would make a detestable husband for that reason.

Monstrosities

In the month of February, 1868, the corpse of Abel (née Alexina) Barbin, who had committed suicide by means of a charcoal stove, was found in a room located on the sixth floor of a house in the rue de l'Ecole-de-Médecine.

Suspecting nothing from the outward appearance of the corpse, the gentlemen had the idea of examining the genital organs.

One could easily penetrate the full length of the vagina with an index finger, but one could feel nothing that recalled the formation of a cervix uteri; on the contrary, one had the feeling of a cul-de-sac.

Upon opening the body, it was easy to unroll the testicular tubes of both testicles. I then placed a small cannula in each of the seminal vesicles, and injected milk into them; this milk jetted out of the orifice of the vulva, on either side.

I have spent months asking for employment, waiting, always receiving negative responses to my overtures. Where can I find for tomorrow that bit of bread that is given by work?

As I had feared, hateful rumors had circulated concerning the intimacy of my relations with Mademoiselle Sara. Only in thought do I still converse with that dear shadow of an extinct love.

When the day of my death comes a few doctors will make a little stir around my corpse; they will shatter all the extinct mechanisms of its impulses.

Monstrosities

Although it seems extraordinary that a mistake about the sex of an individual could be protracted for such a long time, science nevertheless has recorded of a rather large number of such mistakes.

It is accurate to say that most of these cases have not been the object of careful examination on the part of doctors, and that it was most often a fortuitious circumstance that provided a demonstration of the true sex.

The corpse was lying on its back on the bed, partly dressed; the face was cyanosed, and there was a discharge of black and frothy blood coming out of the mouth. The hair was black, abundant, and rather fine.

The impressions of my life are not such as can be thrown in all directions. They have to do with situations few can appreciate.

O princes of science, analyze, if it is possible, the sorrows that have devoured this heart down to its last fibers.

In the ordinary circumstances of life, I have often lacked courage, initiative. In the presence of danger I recover. Misfortune finds me full of strength.

Monstrosities

The autopsy confirmed the exactness of the diagnosis that in the end had assigned him to his true place in society.

My favorite walks in Paris are those I take in Père Lachaise, in the Montmatre cemeteries.

Devotion to the dead has been born in me.

Epilogue: Notes on the Collection and Disarticulation of Specimens

Specimen. From the Latin, *specere*, to look, to look at. See also *spy*.

1. An example, instance, or illustration of something taken to be representative of others in the same class or group.
2. An animal, plant, or mineral deliberately selected for examination, study, or display.
3. A person typical of the human species. (Also colloquial or slang, with derogatory force.)
4. A brief and incomplete account of something in writing, serving to show the chief features (obsolete).

For we have not drawn our information about these monsters from those ephemeral printed sheets which are daily published in our streets, but from the works of our most celebrated Doctors.

(Fortuno Liceti, *On the Causes of Monsters*)

Stuttering begins in the ear of the listener. This affliction is caused by the diagnosis.

(Dr. Wendell Johnson's theory on the cause of stuttering. Johnson was a speech pathologist and was himself a chronic stutterer.)

Prior to collecting specimens in the field, the researcher should know fully the habitat and behavior of the mammal to be collected. He should be familiar with its paths and hiding-places. He must also be familiar with the techniques to be applied. Misshapen, distorted specimens are of little value, and many fine specimens have been lost due to improper procedure.

January 19, 1939. Subject No. 15. Normal speaker.
The subject at present manifests no sign of stuttering. She responded to the suggestion almost immediately. Very easily influenced. Seems to crave attention.

(Mary Tudor, age 23, graduate student
conducting research to test Johnson's theory)

Little needs to be said about hunting techniques or equipment. Head shots should be avoided, as this destroys the skull. When you are close to the specimen that is to be collected, do not fire directly at it. Aim instead to the side.

The stuttering child suffers a loss of morale and self-respect. When asked to speak, he experiences fear, humiliation, and dread. His school performance may suffer, and fighting may ensue. Self-imposed isolation is the common result. The stuttering child is a crippled child.

(Dr. Wendell Johnson, c. 1936)

Traps consist of two heavy jaws, and may be set as follows:

Dig a shallow hole to accommodate the trap. Pack the outside of the jaws with dirt. Sprinkle the trap with bait and cover the jaws with paper. The set is complete when every trace of the trapper has been removed.

We knew they were experimenting on us. Every week someone else would come and test us for God knows what.

(Hazel Potter Dornbush, experimental subject
and former resident of the
Iowa Soldiers' Orphan's Home)

Monstrosities

The best procedure for smaller animals is to force the air from the lungs. Place your foot on the chest and hold it for a moment, or place the specimen in a bag and then depress the lungs between your fingers.

April, 1939. Subject No. 15. Subject reports she has had trouble reading aloud in class. I am pleased to learn that the teacher reinforces the diagnosis by asking her to stop and repeat the word.

Before proceeding, the reader should be advised that the techniques described in the pages below do not all produce the same results. Although their objective is the same, both the degree of efficiency and amount of damage to the specimen varies.

April, 1939. Subject No. 11. Subject's formerly normal speech has deteriorated to partial sentences. During our last session, she slid down in her chair and covered her face with her hands when asked to speak.

March 1939. Subject No. 16. Normal speaker. The subject has now developed mannerisms characteristic of stutterers, such as snapping her fingers to get the word out.

The importance of proper labelling cannot be over emphasized. Specimens and labels are complementary, and each should be prepared with equal care.

Take a breath before the word if you think you're going to stutter. Stop and start over if you stutter. Do not speak unless you can speak correctly.

(Instructions given to children in the experimental group)

It is best to begin by removing the viscera and tongue. Remove the muscles in the cheeks at points of origin and insertion. Remove the organs from rib cage and flesh from between the ribs. Separate the rib cage from the spine.

Monstrosities

Place the specimen on its back and pull or cut the skin away from the body. Turn the skin inside out and, using a fine needle, pass a thread through the inside lower lip.

April 24, 1939. There's a jar. There's a fox. Got a coat on. There's a tree. Little girl. An here's some flowers. Here's a fence. Teapot. Flower bowl.

(Reply of Norma Jean Pugh, experimental subject, when asked by Mary Tudor to tell a story)

Pull the thread taut and pass the needle through the middle of the inside upper lip. Draw the lips together, then knot and cut the thread.

I didn't like what I was doing. It was a hard, a terrible thing. You see, it was an assignment. You did what you were told. It was an assignment. And I did it.

(Mary Tudor Jacobs, age 84)

When disarticulating the specimen, care must be taken not to destroy the connections between the bones. The connections will be needed when mounting the display, to give the specimen a lifelike pose.

May 24, 1939. It is now almost impossible to get the subject to speak in any situation other than play.

Monstrosities

Once you are ready to continue, paint the whole of the inner skin with arsenical soap. Set the skin aside to dry while you prepare the artificial body.

I could have been a scientist, archeologist, or even president. In stead I became a pityful stutter. The kids made fun of me, my grades fell off, I felt stupid. Clear into my adulthood, it effects me to this day. I have nothing left. You stolen my life.

(Letter from Mary Korlaske Nixon,
Subject No. 15, age 74,
to Mary Tudor Jacobs, age 84)

Extend the forelimbs along the chin and pin them close to the body. Turn the hind feet over and pin them close to the tail. This position, though unnatural, takes the least amount of storage room.

Hazel Potter, Case No. 16, has left the orphanage, her speech quite bad.

(Letter from Wendell Johnson
to Mary Tudor, 1941)

Be sure the skin has been poisoned and the mouth has been sewn up. Insert the arificial body and sew up the incision. Attach a label, smooth the fur, and reproportion the body. Usually, the skin will shrink to fit the artificial body very closely. However, if it has been stretched, the skin will need to be worked and pushed together.

It was clear he didn't want me around.
He was worried I'd tell somebody.

(Mary Tudor Jacobs, on Johnson's behavior
six years after the study.)

Monstrosities

At the University of Iowa, where Tudor had been a graduate student, the experiment came to be called “The Monster Study.”

For obvious reasons, the specimens must not be removed from their cabinets. However, specimens that have become dirty from exposure may be washed and bleached. If possible, submerge the bones completely in the solution.

This experiment and its effects are regrettable. However, strict policies now in place make the University confident that experiments of this nature cannot happen again.

(Apology issued by the University of Iowa,
June 2001)

Requirements for the storage of specimens are as follows:

The storage cabinet should be kept in a dry room. The cabinet itself must be light-proof and provided with a seal. This will prevent the entry of dust and pests.

Johnson never published Tudor’s thesis, nor mentioned it in any of his writings. He forwarded his theory citing other evidence.

When specimens have been properly preserved, labelled, and stored, students will know that repetitious and wasteful collecting is no longer necessary. If the Editors have made any omissions in describing the techniques to be applied, they offer their sincere apologies.

Notes/ Works Cited

Some quotes in the poem have been altered slightly, but in all cases I have attempted to remain true to the spirit of the speaker's remarks.

“This Monster is in My House”

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