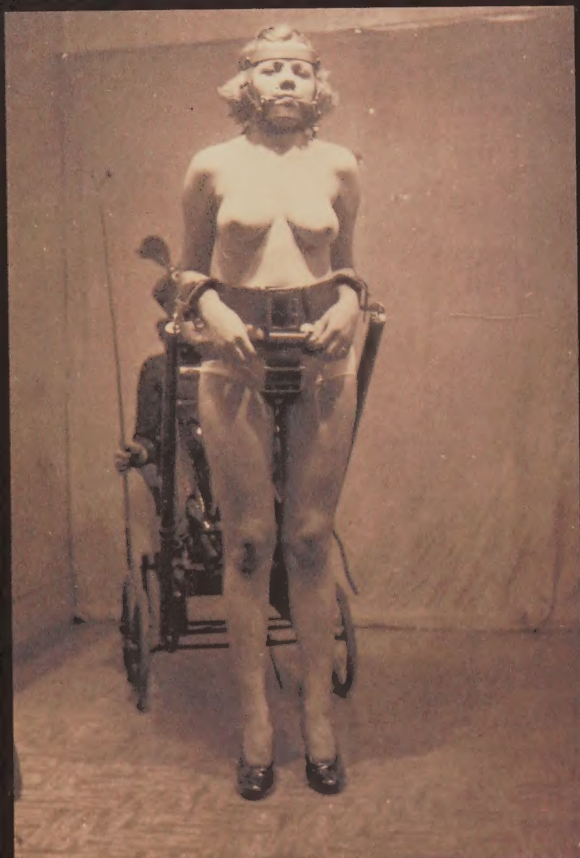










lust

&

madness

HARMS WAY

murder

&

mayhem

*a book of
photographs
edited by
Joel-Peter Witkin*





THEY SAY *I* AND *I*: AND MEAN: ANYBODY

The nights are not made for the masses.
Night divides you from your neighbor,
and by no means are you to seek him out.
And if you light up your room at night
in order to look human beings in the face,
then you must ask yourself: whose.
Human beings are horribly warped by the light
that drips from their faces,
and if at night they have gathered together,
then you'll see a wavering world
all heaped up at random.
On their foreheads yellow glare has
driven out all thought,
in their eyes the wine flickers,
on their hands hangs
the heavy gesture with which they
understand one another in their talks;
and by which they say: *I* and *I*
and mean: Anybody.

Rainer Maria Rilke, *The Book of Images*, 1899-1906

Ask Yourself: Whose

Throat cut ear to ear, a woman slumps against a wood burning cook stove; newspapers nearby feature the Red Sox and designate Ypres, France “the Pompeii of the Great War.” Another woman falls near a bannister on patterned linoleum, hair outshining the satin of her hat; on her skirt a man’s cap sits like an author’s signature. Another woman with a stained bodice collapses into her petticoats along a footpath. Another lies cocooned in patchwork. They sprawl in rooms hung with college pennants or devotionals of ancestors, the Christ Child, or the Passion. They swoon on chairs near a mantelpiece draped in striped sateen and crowned by an ornamental clock. They face heaven in railway yards, or in scantily furnished rooms with pictures askew, and lace curtains parted to let in the dark day. The curtains in some of these scenes float like disembodied wings, betraying a breeze which passes over bed linen immaculate in the explosion of the camera’s magnesium flare.

Men fall in the street, before a shop that sells cornices and skylights, which suggest, perhaps, a magical means of rapid descent and reentry. Bodies are cast down, as if from high places through some terrible miscalculation. One man lies flat on the pavement, arms outstretched in a question; another seems almost delivered to the entrance of an apartment house, perhaps as a surprise. Arms, legs, torsos, rigidifying as the images are made, twist in stubborn chagrin, abandon, even rage. Crowds close in: a man has fallen, as if out of the sky. The pictures suggest as much, for not only are they still lifes, but every detail, encoding overwhelmingly dramatic, even heroic action, sacrifice, and destiny, draws us to a spectacle.

Children playing in a vacant lot find a wine barrel with a man stabbed twenty-four times inside. A distraught brother arrives too late to find that his sister has opened a gas jet into a tiny cubicle and extinguished herself and all her children. We feel that we see virtually what the first discoverers saw: the still life, a *mysterium tremendum* with nearly tangible silence, the aura of past action from the history of a life to the circumstances of its end hovers like an afterimage. We stare and move closer.

The photographs offer unprecedented access to ways of life that seem antiquated, but only through incidentals of style. These fallen are mostly homicide victims in New York City, specifically, between 1914 and 1918. Most of them were born in the previous century which had witnessed in dress the evolving refinements of profuse body-encasing fabric and tight lacing: flounced petticoats, hobble skirts, lamp shade hats stretched with lustrous cloth, high topped shoes, corsets, camisoles, starched shirt fronts, buttoned vests, celluloid collars, lacquered coiffures. The pictures speak of a time when one put on a hat to go into the street, pay a call, or meet a stranger. There are many other niceties in these scenes around freshly ironed curtains, pillow shams, sheets, bodices. The pressing iron was as essential a life ingredient as baking soda. Clothing was layered upon layer. Even undressed, women especially, somehow remained clothed; in death they swim in piles of their own yardage.

We cannot look at these photographs today without wondering why we want to look at them, why we want to probe each one, puzzle over what seems at the same time alien and yet profoundly familiar: varnished balusters, scarred wainscoting, a white porcelain door knob, gas jets, watch chains, pleated satin skirts filthy from pavements and curbs, brocade cravats, freshly ironed dresser scarves, wax roses, striped ticking, a plaited queue, an uncircumcised penis, a penis erect through underwear at the moment of death, heavy-lidded eyes, lips parting, about to speak, the jaw tied to prevent it. This is a world of fact, without memory; each victim carries a Book of Life within, but on the whole, from what little, beyond facts, the photographs allow us to see, we don't know what the book is or how to read it.

Despite the abundance of specific details harvested by the camera lens, it is easy to join these victims' fates and accompanying gestures to other communities of catastrophe; for the bodies' frozen spasms hardly differ from those of the lava-encased citizens fleeing Pompeii after the eruption of Vesuvius in 79 A. D. They are not unlike the seas of agonized solitaries that Rodin sculpted in 1884 for his monumental *Gates of Hell*. Equally, it is impossible to witness any photographed corpse today without reflecting on the photographs of souls martyred by the millions in Hitler's Germany. Beyond these associations the bodies of murder victims in New York carry additional grandeur outside of recountable history that asks us to link them to mythical themes of sacrifice in which heroes fall from great heights, or among horses, shields, and spears, rather than crashing against a tawdry storefront or onto a mere mattress.

Destiny looms in such pictures of the fallen, for these assassinated citizens



Figure 1: Paris, Prefecture of Police, Identification Service, "The Inverted Camera in Situ," 1893, albumen silver print, from Alphonse Bertillon, *Service d'identification de la Préfecture de police pour l'Exposition universelle de Lyon, 1894*, Collection Joachim Bonnemaïson, Paris.



Figure 2: Paris, Prefecture of Police, Identification Service, "Print Made with an Inverted Camera," 1893, albumen silver print, from Alphonse Bertillon, *Service d'identification de la Préfecture de police pour l'Exposition universelle de Lyon, 1894*, Collection Joachim Bonnemaïson, Paris.

testify to the exercise of a range of aberrant, unfathomable wills. The pictures hold clues to the impulsive or calculated solutions to problems. But which problems are they? Mostly, we don't know what forces brought the victims to their end. Did the pitch black hallway, owing to a cheap landlord or one for whom the electric light bulb was still too novel to be essential, perhaps inspire someone on May 3, 1915 to eviscerate a child there? What caused a young person to be left hemorrhaging on a tabletop surrounded by yards of lace curtains? Who among the well-educated would write a threatening letter that states in dynamic, intelligent, and highly articulated script: "I am going to murder you and your family..."? The photographs don't have the answers to any question we might ask. They have been separated from their dossiers; most have lost their identifying labels and dates, which makes it impossible to check back to newspaper accounts or to investigative detectives' notebooks. We have only the terrible image itself, whether a scene, or a photographed letter, in the face of which one's own first impulse is flight, and then, as if hypnotized, obsessive bewilderment, that turns curiously to hunger seeking nourishment.

Seek Him Out

By the time of the Great War (1914-1918) photographic identification by the police was a prideful institution refined globally into something like a science. Alphonse Bertillon, from 1888 chief of the Service of Judicial Identity in the Paris Prefecture of Police, had perfected in 1882 a set of documentary



Figure 3: Paris, Prefecture of Police, Identification Service, "View at the Exposition of the Installation of Apparatuses for Photographing a Scene of a Crime," 1893, albumen silver print, from Alphonse Bertillon, *Service d'identification de la Préfecture de police pour l'Exposition universelle de Lyon, 1894*, Collection Joachim Bonnemaison, Paris.

procedures for how to measure, as well as photograph, frontally and in profile featuring the ear, the physiognomies of criminals and suspects in order to create a massive archive for identifying the "dangerous classes" and for reidentifying relapsed criminals or recidivists. Bertillon invented an "anthropometric" laboratory for his measurements, but he also perfected a means of photographing the theater of a crime, with a special battery of camera equipment, including wide-angle lenses, and a vantage point from which to survey a murder site. Many of Bertillon's photographs of crimes were actually used in murder trials, where in France at the time such detail was considered admissible evidence that the instruction, so called, presented specifically to horrify the jury and quickly obtain a conviction.¹

By the year of Bertillon's death in 1914, most police departments in major western cities had big cameras with wide angle lenses, large apertures, and tripods with legs that could be extended to form a high tent-like scaffold over the victim, necessarily portraying him or her not only dead, but as viewed from on high, in a hierarchical perspective, one might say, that recorded, but also proposed an interpretation of the victim related to current thinking regarding surveillance. Rather than spectacle, the concept is one of isolation and individualization, for below the supported camera pointing downward, the body forms a clear contour against the floor which extracts it into a memorable, cutout of a final, lonely sigh.² (figures 1, 2, 3)

These high-camera American images of the first decades of the twentieth century perfectly concretize Michel Foucault's explorations of seventeenth

and eighteenth century institutional surveillance in which all that was aberrant, from madman to murder victim, was relegated to “spaces of exclusion,” actual or conceptual. Foucault cited as a paragon of this, philosopher Jeremy Bentham’s utopian proposal in 1791 of a Panopticon, an architectural structure that permitted guardians to keep in constant view suspects or criminals contained in a beehive of luminous cells from a fixed central position in a tower.³ Police photography of crime scenes from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries extends Bentham’s animated silhouetting, the intention of which was clearly to separate a suspect’s gestures and actions from those of others. Like the Panopticon, the camera is, of course, also “capable of making all visible”; its “faceless gaze” is that of an instrument called into being by a modern society increasingly based on close observation.

On a high tripod focusing on one exclusionary “theatrical” space per 8 x 10 inch glass plate negative, the camera embodies Foucault’s conception of constantly fixed attention; one person at a time is entrapped in an official field of perception.⁴ But here, it is not the criminal perpetrator who is outlined, inventoried, and borne over, but the victim. It has been photography’s principal role since its invention to give a pictorial voice to conceptions previously described. Here we see the camera subjecting victims after death to regulations once assigned to the living and thus subjecting all members of a society to the rigors of a modern malady: investigation.

French newspaper accounts of crimes throughout the 1890s and well into the twentieth century report that it was Bertillon himself, not his agents, who photographed all the major scenes of homicide in Paris. He mostly elected a vantage point that was not high, but that incorporated the corpse into a scene like the final act of a theatrical melodrama, as if to imply, beyond the massive record keeping, a moral position like that of Bentham, an “imaginative projection” Bertillon called it, that disdained the disruption of a nearly sacred French middle class ordering of daily life, the bourgeois routine of meals, freshly ironed napkins, linens scented by stalks of vetiver in huge commodes, even in the interiors of the poor, now violated by motives of greed, lust, insanity and confusion.

New York newspapers seem to have been less committed to sustained melodramatic narrative in their crime reporting. But from before the turn of the century the New York City police had a team of photographers who clearly had adopted Bertillon’s technical refinements in their investigative work. Some of these men’s names appear on labels on their negatives,⁵ a practice much less common in France during the same period.

Each space that holds these New York dead defines a site of violent action, for nothing in it is right. Yet it is perplexing to contemplate exactly what such records were meant to hold, and what purpose they served criminal investigators beyond an emblematic one. A cardinal rule in investigating a homicide is, of course, not to touch anything. French photographic crime scenes from this time are distinguished by a pristine intimacy, as if the photographer were a surgeon cutting through the peritoneum to expose vital



Figure 4: Paris, Prefecture of Police, "Murder of Mme Leprince, dealer in artificial flowers, 119, rue Saint-Denis, 3 June 1898, by her employee Xavier Schneider," albumen silver print, from *A Crime Album*. Collection of Gérard Lévy and François Lepage, Paris.

organs to the light for the first time. The French police strictly followed procedures that eliminated in the image any presence of intruders. We know the camera is there, but it has entered on tip-toes into domestic sanctuaries of well-kept secrets, for the French home, from no matter what social station, was considered truly a world apart. The bodies in situ are like suspensions in aspic. (figure 4)

The dead in the New York images, by contrast, were not always left to rest in peace. As with the Union and Confederate soldiers sacrificed during the Civil War, documenters had few qualms about moving the victims and props to accommodate the exigencies of photographing them. Just as we have the names of so many of the American police photographers, we witness in the images themselves intervening official presences that feel like signatures. Strange adjustments to the crime scene appear in the documentation of it. A dying victim might have been carried to a bed, for example, where after death the body was photographed. Other touching gestures, presumably by investigators, also betray an air of compassion. A pair of women's shoes has been placed on the bed next to the corpse of a young girl pale from a massive loss of blood, and in numerous pictures much is made over the inclusion of a hat.

This was a time when hats were not after-thoughts but integral to a presentation of the complete social self. It is significant that a victim's hat is nearly always recovered in order to be included in the photograph's theatrical format, and thus completes the person after death as well. Some victims' hats have been set down gallantly next to them or even upon them, in what looks

like a gesture of official respect. The man's cap lying on the skirt of the woman fallen in the hallway is clearly included as a piece of evidence to incriminate the author of the crime. A more cynical approach is also evident. Doesn't the skirt lifted coyly above the knee of the young girl, dead in a chair next to the mantelpiece, seem to impute a judgement of coquetry to the victim? But who would be the wiser for such a trifling intervention? The pictures were destined, after all, for burial in the files.

Besides being records of overt meddling, the New York pictures include around the body clear evidence of the process of the investigation itself as an animated margin that surrounds the silent victim. One third of the images collected here include in the record the legs of the tall tripod, trousers, polished shoes, and sometimes push in our faces the active hand of operator or detective, besides random details, like a package of cigarettes, deck of cards, or Edison light bulbs on a shelf that got in the way of the shot. Other pieces vital to the case show up, too, for example in the kitchen knife, labeled as evidence, that lies on a table beside a stabbing victim.

Such theatrical touches by the authorities, while animating the altogether silent scenes, lend the pictures another kind of intimacy. By making visible the equipment and tell-tale hands and feet of the investigation, it is as if we were not only prying, but had privileged access to a strange superstructure that begins to transform an act of violent passion or sacrifice, to diminish it really, into one merely requiring institutional control. We witness this control not as something efficient but marginal, even bumbling, in the random appearance of other beings, whose living gestures stand for a puzzling activity, vagaries of a still new attempt to systematize investigation itself.

At Random

The glass plate negatives of these pictures used to exist in the hundreds of thousands in the police files of New York City. By the 1960s, many were regarded as useless, having been ruined by mildew and dirt. Since it was thought that they were taking up too much space, the police began not only to dispose of these piles of glass, each bearing the last pose of a human life, but they destroyed masses of files and investigators' notebooks as well. Interestingly, this occurred at the moment when historians of photography, with renewed intensity, had begun to redefine the medium as an art no different from any other in its capacity to convey the most diverse human passions, yet with its own visual rules and codes. New curators were starting to exhibit, in the great museums of New York, alongside work by recognized masters, photographs which had never before seen museum walls. All the while, many beautiful police images, photographically chronicling devastating mystery and intrigue, were being dumped into the East River.

As is often the case, in massively destructive actions of this kind, the specimens that escaped notice were inadvertently saved. A small room under a staircase, simply overlooked, contained some 1350 glass negatives from around the period of the Great War. In a spirit of conservation that has existed in New York police circles since 1971, when the city began putting all

investigative material on micro-film, John R. Podracky, curator of the Police Academy Museum in Manhattan insisted on preserving all of the surviving images and to assure this hired a photographer to make inter-negatives of them.⁶

Pictures such as these, from so long ago, like dead letters, are officially regarded as of little significance in most cities.⁷ At the same time they are regarded as highly sensitive information, and when it comes to what to do with them, who should see them, and what they might mean to audiences seeing them without the circumstantial information, official feelings become mysterious, secretive, and protective.⁸ Here are a few for the eyes of those who will look. How should we look at them apart from morbid curiosity? And is there something else they offer besides satisfying that?

Wavering World

What we see has been kept secret for years, was intended for an elect. The photographic record is not the description of a crime. Rather we have a configuration of an aftermath, marked by consistent interventions by those in charge, in a medium that lends itself to a drastic transformation of three dimensions into a flatland devoid of spatial resonance. It is striking how formulaic the presentations are.

What is most difficult to answer in viewing these codified spaces is the obvious question of, what happened? We could review each scene in an attempt to identify the inhabitants' social and economic class or ethnicity through clothing, or the arrangement of the rooms. But what are the ear phones doing next to the head of the victim in "Homicide Roshinsky 518 Fourth Avenue Astoria 2/15/16"? Why does her hand look black? Was she operating a ham radio as a surreptitious war-time hobby? Was she electrocuted? But "homicide" means something else. This is all guess work, and there is nothing to be learned that hasn't already occurred to us through looking. It is possible to explore the newspapers in hope of finding, through the chance notation of a date on a negative, an account of the crime itself. For the Roshinsky case this information led nowhere.⁹

While researching his first book *Low Life*, 1991, which describes assorted hubs of crime in nineteenth-century New York, Luc Sante came across the New York Police Department's collection of inter-negatives of these saved images in the Municipal Archives on Chambers Street. His next book *Evidence*, 1992, published the largest group of them for the first time. Here Sante described what he saw in these scenes. His eloquent text's "uncertainty of tone"¹⁰ is revealing, for it mirrors the tremolo of our own heartbeats as we approach the pictures' silent spheres. But try as he may to allow information to open up the pictures, ultimately the written records fail him. This is not his fault; rather the difficulty lies in the inevitable failure of facts before images like these, whose power today lies precisely in their ability to transcend the banality of their circumstances.

Sometimes, though not always, as we have seen, when the negatives had a date Sante traced accounts of certain crimes through the newspapers: The "double homicide #708" at 90 Hopkinson Avenue, Brooklyn on June 17, 1915

is Mrs. Barbara Cornelius 24 and her admirer George F. McAghon 35, to whom she wrote love notes and would sneak out and call from a drugstore phone booth. McAghon, a widower with four small children from Jersey City, was required to carry a hand gun on his \$120. a month job as assistant foreman for the Pennsylvania Railroad. He sneaked into Cornelius's apartment at 1:30 a.m thinking her husband Carman had already gone to work. But on that particular night Carman was at home sick. McAghon climbed in the window "under the glare of several street lamps," saw the husband, and started shooting as Carman ran from the room for help, thinking the lover was a burglar. Then McAghon seems to have killed Mrs. Cornelius and himself.

The facts restore the pictures of this crime to the everyday world, which only serves to generate more questions. Sante tries patiently to piece together strategies, if not motives and observes, charmingly, about "the scheduling of trysts," that for his meeting with "Bessie" in Bedford Stuyvesant, McAghon had to endure two ferry crossings and a lengthy trolley ride.¹¹

Mrs. Cornelius had been named in the divorce of her husband's first wife. Was she a habitual coquette? We don't know. Then what was McAghon's motive? We don't know that either. Perhaps he acted with the immense concentration that follows an overwhelming vision of forfeited possibilities. Yet in death he assumes the husband's position in the bed (or have the police arranged him thusly?) and seems to reach for the hand of Mrs. Cornelius through her quilt, a gesture that unites them in perpetuity under the camera eye. His hat's central placement on the bed as a dapper calling card, is so incongruous, even cynical, in this light that we must imagine another instance of moralizing police intervention.

Sante discovered that the man in the wine barrel was Gaspare Candella of Brooklyn (identified from a draft card) with a police record in Boston, New York, and Washington D.C. His cut throat and twenty four stab wounds to the upper body were the result of a "feud."¹² For the pile of figures under a moldering quilt, Sante's newspaper research in the New York American of October 16, 1915 turned up "Four Die from Gas": after Mrs. Josephine Huntsinger of 555 Sixth Avenue, Brooklyn learned of her husband's drowning she turned the gas on herself and three children. The entire family was buried together.¹³

Knowing these stories brings us into another relationship with the pictures, one less likely to allow a leap into the realm of myth or dreams. Knowing the story closes the case absolutely. As it satisfies curiosity, strangely, it deadens the image. Every picture carries its Book of Life, but that is not what attracts us. We may think that we look because we want to know the story, but I don't think that learning the facts makes us treasure the pictures more. It may justify our staring, but that is hardly an excuse. It is useful to know some of the stories in order to realize that sordid, and miserable details are everyone's.

A victim who has fallen in a toilet surrenders a neatly wrapped box and pocketful of letters and papers to the filthy floor. Did the box hold \$50.00

bills? Would the letter with two stamps be one he might have received as he came to save himself with ransom money? Two threatening letters rendered into photographs turn up in the collection presented here. The shorter of the two, dated 1/14/16, includes an envelope addressed to: Glynn & Ward, Century Theater, Robson St. and Nostrand Ave., Brooklyn. The letter reads: "...pay the sum of \$5,000....at the cost of your life....This evening we let you off easily just to give you a chance to realize what we are able to do." The script is small, rounded, tight. A professional graphologist facing this text was able to sketch the portrait of an obsequious, four-eyed, mealy-mouthed, grunt in a conspiracy. The writer to Glynn & Ward is someone with deep, strong, guarded feelings, "who's been eroded", a methodical learner who might have sat wearing a green visor at an accounting table for forty years, who, now, easily led by others quicker to anger than he is, writes on their behalf. He's not angry, nor dishonest, nor even dangerous; rather he writes deliberately, of others' well-laid plans for getting even.

Despite the fiercely consistent slant of the strokes, the first page of the other letter to Mr. H. A. Guess asking on December 15, 1914 for \$1,740. in fifty and twenty dollar bills for "damages," or "I am going to murder you and your family or a part of the family," according to the graphologist, isn't angry or dishonest either. This dynamic, aggressive, highly reactive male writer, is not only capable of getting even, he will do it, now. He is physically fit, cultured, intelligent, well-educated, well-read, and articulate. His confidence shows high self-esteem; he harbors fierce loyalties and if threatened, is capable of an immediate explosive reaction. He bears watching because he is a formidable enemy. With this man, according to the graphologist, "It's a good time to send the kids to Switzerland." There are aspects of the writer's hand, in the formation of the "Y" in "York," "You," and "Your" that speak of a quality of character as integral to the culture of an age past as the pressing iron or the obligatory hat. That quality, which has all but deserted us today, is simple self responsibility. The writer to Mr. Guess is capable of acting vigorously, morally, and fearlessly, in the face of what he rightly perceives to be just.¹⁴

At first sight, especially in the context of images demonstrating the aftermath of what it means to show what "we are able to do at the cost of your life," both letters seem like the mutterings of two homicidal maniacs. They represent the only perpetrators in the pictures illustrated here. Yet what emerges in a technical analysis of the script are portraits of two divergent, but stable personalities who feel wronged and begin to set the stage for revenge. Is this a disappointment? Perhaps. The *frisson* occurs when we begin to imagine the state of mind of the recipient.

What draws us to these images of crimes, I would venture to say, is not our morbid confrontation with "victims," or with "assassins," but with actual people, and the minute particularities that speak for feelings, actions, ways of life, and the inevitable element of chance. But more than this, the most redeeming feature of our experience with these photographically codified dead is that the bodies of the fallen carry the residual gestures of that moment of

transition, in the departure of the spirit. These victims fall in heroic poses of surrender, which, held in photographic chemicals, send out circles of attractive energy, draw an audience of spectators, led into a world of shivering and shuddering. We shiver not only because we are faced with a dead person, but because we begin to perceive, in mythical terms, through what appears to be the random sacrifice of living beings, the existence of a hidden Killer-Being, an uncanny someone, clearly unknown to us. Through the pictures we enter a realm of unfathomable strangeness, an experience as old as humanity itself, but one essential to integrating the incomprehensibility of what links death to our own humanity.¹⁵

In an exhibition of drawings of flight that he curated from collections in the Louvre in 1993, British film director Peter Greenaway mused over our dreams of flying out of this world and back again. His selection began with drawings illustrating the principle of gravity and crescendoed not only with angels plummeting during The Great Fall, but with other great “falls” of Phaeton, Icarus, and of Simon Magus, sorcerer, wizard, and quack who climbed onto a tall building and demanded that demons make him fly. The demons’ power was canceled, and Simon fell into the streets of Samaria. What splendid stories are attached to levitation, flight, fall, torture by gravity. “It is an awesome sight, repeatedly drawn and painted. How long did it last, this Fall of Angels? Was it all over in an hour? Or did it take days, weeks, years? Is it still going on?” Greenaway asks.¹⁶

Throughout the history of art such grand themes endlessly have been drawn and painted. But they have been inadvertently photographed too. It is my feeling that we devour these police photographs, not so much for what they actually are, but for what these frozen spasms suggest to us in the way of heroic surrender when all of the forces that might redeem a human life have failed. These are not fallen angels; their materiality is all too forcefully present. They are figures whose postures register the supreme shock of being mythically cast down.

In sifting through the details of these tawdry deaths our capacity for dreaming into them does not fail us, despite the information we crave to illuminate them in terms of our own experiences. These photographs design the dead in a universe different from our own, as flat stars in a flat galaxy.¹⁷ We must admit to ourselves, as we take them on, that such pictures fulfill a need, increasingly insistent, to face in two dimensions what in the third we will never understand, and what the fourth has yet to reveal.

Eugenia Parry Janis

NOTES

1. Alphonse Bertillon, *La Photographie judiciaire, avec un appendice sur la classification et l'identification anthropométriques*, Paris, Gauthier-Villars et Fils, Imprimeurs-Libraires, 1890, pp. 46-50.
2. Bertillon photographically recorded his methods of measurement and documentation in order to publicize them in book form around the world. His *Service d'identification de la Préfecture de police pour l'Exposition universelle de Chicago, 1893*, (National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, PSCHO: 286: 1-34) is a presentation album of thirty-four photographs with letter press made to demonstrate his procedures, step by step, to an American audience. There must have been a good number of such explications. Another example, with exactly the same photographs, made for an exhibition in Lyons, belongs to Joachim Bonnemaison in Paris, whose photography collection focuses on panoramas. Figures 1, 2, and 3 come from this example.
3. Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish, The Birth of the Prison*, transl. by Alan Sheridan, New York, Vintage Books, Division of Random House, 1979, ch. 3, "Panopticism," pp. 195-228.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 214.
5. Luc Sante in *Evidence*, New York, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1992, which published the largest number of these images for the first time, cites (p. xii) the names of photographers John Golden, Clement Christensen, Arthur DeVoe, Frederick Zwirz, Charles Abrams, Charles Carsbrer found on or among the surviving negatives available to him for consultation. The exact terms of the professional relationship these photographers had with the New York City Police Department are unknown.
6. With funds granted by New York state, Podracky hired Deborah Egan, a free-lance photographer to do this lab work. She asserts that of the 1350 surviving glass plate negatives, 100 were broken, allowing her to make inter-negatives of only 1250. She sketched a brief account of her role in this act of conservation and illustrated eight of the images for the first time in an article entitled "Police Photos from the New York City Police Department, 1900-1930s," in *Untitled*, October, 1989. This magazine, which she and free-lance photographer Susan Stava published, in part to publicize the police photographs, had six issues. Their knowledge of these pictures and their importance precedes that of Luc Sante who may not have known of their involvement in the conservation process when he used the pictures for both of his books since he does not mention them.
7. In Paris, a flood in 1910 ruined many thousands of glass plate negatives of the *Identité judiciaire*. For lack of storage space, in 1993 officials from the Ministry of the Interior began to destroy massive quantities of Bertillon's classic profile and frontal "mug" shots "of all persons born before 1907." We do not know yet if anyone fished out the more interesting ones for safe keeping. It is thought that those of Mata Hari, Bonnot, the "Bluebeard" killer, Landru, and others as notorious were saved.) Such massive disposals have plagued the French national archives as well. Archivists state in their inventories that great lacunae exist in files of the judicial section of the Archives nationales in Paris, and this author has noted similar gaps while researching the picture archives of the Paris Prefecture of Police. Recently, Clotilde Leroy published a highly abbreviated account of this official massive disposal in "Police: Archives en péril," in a small Paris publication called *Georges, Photographes & Photographies*, no. 2, 1993, p. 11, an issue which begins its table of contents with Herve Guibert's remark, "*Il faut que les secrets circulent.*" (Secrets should circulate.)
8. Susan Stava, who with Deborah Egan published a few of the retrieved negatives in 1989, indicated that John Podracky of the Police Museum in the Police Academy on 21st Street had intended to mount an exhibition of the finished prints but that, inexplicably, this never occurred. Telephone conversation between this writer and Susan Stava, July, 1993.
9. Luc Sante, *Evidence*, pp. 71-72.
10. The phrase is Max Kozloff's in "Stilled Lives, *Artforum*, Summer, 1993, p.79, who also perceived in Sante's remarkable book the fact that such pictures may require a longer period of contact before beginning to write than the author was willing to give them.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 69. By selecting a much less revealing view of the couple taken from a waist high vantage point, rather than the towering "hierarchical" one, illustrated here, Sante enables us to contemplate the varying kinds of investigative attitudes that circled around the scene, apart from those that merely bore down upon it.
12. *Ibid.*, p. 74.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 71.
14. Based on the analyses of graphologist Frank G. Budd, M.G.A., Glendale, Arizona.
15. Edgar Herzog, *Psyche and Death, Death-Demos in Folklore, Myths, and Modern Dreams*, transl. by David Cox and Eugene Rolfe, Dallas, Texas, Spring Publications, 1983, p. 17.
16. Peter Greenaway, *Le bruit des nuages*, Flying out of this World, Paris, Réunion des Musées nationaux, 1993, p. 138.
17. British clergyman, Edwin A. Abbott's *Flatland, A Romance of Many Dimensions*, an illuminating text of popular metaphysics written in 1884 (New York, Signet, 1984) fancifully contrasts a world of amoral geometrical flatness in which the social hierarchy of geometrical beings is arranged so that the many-sided figures rule over those with fewer sides. This is contrasted to the higher moral order of Spaceland with its third-dimensional "position of advantage." All of this is academically argued in order to teach another kind of "perspective," that is in order to lead our souls into a redemptive fourth dimension or metaphysical realm of contemplation. I am grateful to sculptor Lawrence Fane for allowing me to contemplate this enchanting source in relation to the metaphysical problems raised by police photographs.













































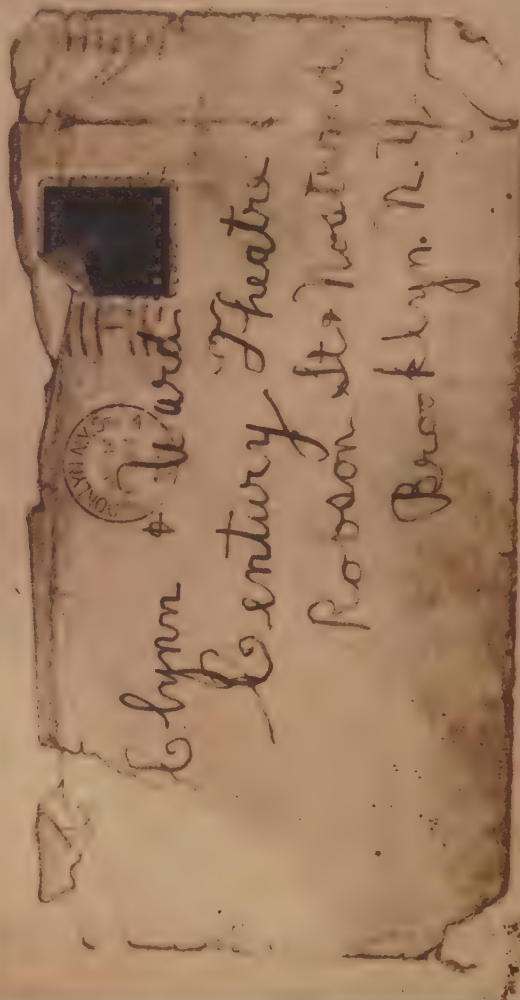
Brooklyn 1/14/16.

Dear Sir,

We inform you to pay the sum of (\$5,000) to some one who is capable of finding us without letting the police department know any thing about it, at the cost of your life.

For this evening we let you off easily just to give you a chance to realize what we are able to do.

We are waiting for a soon and favorable reply.



New York City
Dec 15 - 1914

Mr H. A. Guess

I demand seventeen hundred
and forty dollars \$1,740⁰⁰, from you to be
mailed to me at General Delivery New York City
so it will be in the post office by
8 P.M. Wednesday evening. December 16th
do not Register letter - But address it on
the Typewriter, 24 - ²30⁰⁰ bills and 27 - ²20⁰⁰ bills
to be put in two envelopes one seal inside
the other. If this money is not mailed
I am going to murder you and your
family or a part of the family.
I came to New York to do it - I think
just as much of my wife and kids as
you do of your wife and Sherry - if my
family has to suffer when you are the
cause of it - then your family has got
to do likewise - I do not want any of
your money free - I just want damage
I have been out of work for over a year
and you are the one that put me out of
work. I am now \$185⁰⁰ in debt and out

Until the first quarter of the twentieth century, the possibility of infectious epidemics devastating civilian populations as well as armies was common. Epidemics often changed the course of history. World War I was derailed by the onset of influenza. It has been estimated that of all the people that have lived on our planet until the year 1800, about one in five died of smallpox. In fact, smallpox was a kind of primitive germ warfare, spread in "gift blankets" among our Native American population, that assisted in the "peaceful" settling of our eastern seaboard.

Physicians once were perhaps the most important members of society, guarding it from destruction by disease. Quarantine, isolation and strict enforcement of sanitary procedures saved society, ensuring the safety of high-density urban populations. It is hard for us to imagine today how disease affected life in earlier times. The present AIDS epidemic gives us only the slightest hint. For example, in 1878, yellow fever killed 4,000 in New Orleans alone. The city was appropriately nicknamed the "Necropolis of the South." In New Jersey in 1874, malaria was the prime health problem. In 1897, the New York City Commissioner of Charities reported that the Infants' Hospital's ninety-six percent mortality rate was "not as bad as it looks." In a nine-month period during the influenza epidemic of 1918, about 500,000 Americans of the 20,000,000 who were infected died. During the twentieth century, great strides have been taken towards controlling mortality from disease, so that disease now seems to occur chiefly at the end of life. The physician's role has been reduced to a more superficial advisory status. His dictums, once law, now are regarded as "advice."

Most of the photographic images presented here were made in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, when modern medicine began to hold out the first promise of effective diagnosis and treatment and the conquest of disease. These images reflect a sense of promise, hope and belief in the fledgling technologies of photography and modern medicine. Over the past century, many of the diseases depicted have been eradicated or effectively controlled. Today the prospect of conquest of genetic disease, once deemed impossible, is becoming reality. Some congenital deformities now may be controlled by genetic engineering, which promises to be the key to health in the next century. As the germ theory was to medicine in the nineteenth century, so is genetic study in our century: a guiding light to the future.

Many of the images here document how photography has changed society and our lives. They show individuals' reactions to the camera and the power and "magic" of science. A photograph of an abused child pressured legislators to pass laws against such abuse. An Orthodox Jew with an unusual disease sets aside his religion's doctrines, allowing himself to be photographed in order for an expert consultation to be implemented. A physician attempts to identify social misfits by noting their tattoos. The diseased and deformed are identified and educated. These clinical images of conquered diseases show how far we have progressed and how far we have to go.

Stanley B. Burns, M. D.

PAISLEY GIRL; *Henry G. Piffard, M. D.; New York City; 7 x 9", Artotype; 1891.* Disease often decorates the body in strange and wonderful patterns. Although she appears to be wearing a paisley dress, this young woman is actually manifesting a hyper-sensitive allergic skin reaction—"erythema annulare." The disease has produced a bizarre, almost beautiful, pattern over her body. Erythema (a hyperemia of the skin) is the first and most common skin reaction caused by an internal or external irritant. Common irritants include foods, drugs, chemicals, animals, bacterial or viral substances, as well as radiation, heat or cold, rheumatic fever, insect bites, cancer and sensitivity to one's own tissue. Even psychological disturbances may manifest themselves in this way. Treatment for the condition usually and most simply consists of removing the offending causative material—when it can be determined. Piffard published this photograph in 1891, with a series of others, in his treatise on diseases of the skin.

OZENA, HOLE IN NOSE FROM SYPHILIS; *O. G. Mason, M.D., New York City; 5 x 7", Artotype; 1881.* Destruction of the nose was a frequent result of tuberculosis and syphilis, two of the nineteenth century's most common infectious diseases. Tuberculosis typically destroyed the cartilage, while syphilis eroded the bone. Because of its association with syphilis, nasal deformity carried an unfortunate social stigma. This was especially true when the infected nasal passages were attacked by other micro-organisms, resulting in "ozena."

Ozena is derived from the Greek word "to stink." The foul nasal discharge and putrid breath of those patients with nasal atrophy made their presence unbearable. The ozena associated with syphilis was the most offensive of all, and made public its sufferer's disease. This woman has the classical deformity of syphilis. Treatment of ozena essentially involved burning out the infected areas with caustic agents. On occasion, pioneer plastic surgeons fashioned skin grafts to repair the defects. Many patients resorted to a nose prosthesis or mask. Today, antibiotic therapy has made the condition rare.

YOUNG WOMAN WITH LARGE NOSE; *James Robinson, D. D. S., Dublin, Ireland; 4 x 5½", Albumen Print; c. 1874.* At this time, congenital deformities of all types were usually regarded as stigmata that had to be borne throughout life; surgical corrections were rarely attempted. The development of anaesthesia made possible painless surgery and prolonged operations. However, until Lister introduced antiseptic surgical techniques, it was unusual to employ surgery to repair congenital deformities, because of the hazards of death from infection.

This photograph is a part of a series taken for the College of Surgeons in Dublin, many of which appeared in the *Dublin Journal of Medical Science*. The patient suffers from an abnormally large nose due to separation of the

bones. In the most serious cases, two noses are possible. It is doubtful that this patient would have been operated on in her era.

4

LUPUS OF THE FACE WITH CORNEAL INVOLVEMENT; *Dr. Jean Alexandre Lacassagne, Lyon, France; 5 x 7", Silver Print; c. 1895.* For seven centuries, the term "lupus," derived from the Latin for "wolf," described a series of ulcerative diseases of the face, that appeared to bite and eat away at the face, until it was destroyed. This unfortunate patient's skin disease and secondary infection destroys normal anatomy, distorting and deforming the face. In pre-antibiotic days, it was not uncommon for many facial skin diseases to cause the extreme scarring, mutilation and complications seen here. The scarring about her eye has resulted in the inability to close the eyelid. As the eye is left open and unprotected, lack of protective lubrication will result in the crystal-clear cornea becoming opaque, resulting in blindness. In the past, lupus, pemphigoid, congenital syphilis and many of the horrendous facially disfiguring skin diseases frequently caused blindness. Modern science has now distinguished many forms of lupus, each with its own clinical characteristics. Lupus erythematosus is one of a group of diffuse systemic disorders that affects the connective tissue system. Lupus and several related diseases are considered to be auto-immune diseases, in which the body reacts to stimuli by destroying its own tissue.

5

LAURA BRIDGEMAN; *The first blind and deaf person to be educated in America; Warrens, Boston; 4 x 5½", Albumen Print; c. 1870.* It was not until the nineteenth century that the "insane," "retarded," "feeble-minded," "blind," "deaf" and "dumb" were separated into different diagnostic and prognostic categories. Until that time, the insane, retarded and dumb were often chained together, and were thought to be uneducable. One of the great triumphs of the century was the differentiation of the groups, and the distinguishing of those who could be educated from those who could not.

Laura Bridgeman was as famous in her time as Helen Keller in ours. She was the first deaf and blind person to be educated. Because of her condition, she was also considered "dumb"—a diagnostic category, which after her training, went by the wayside. Samuel Gridley Howe, M. D., founded the Perkins Institution for the Blind as an educational enterprise. There he trained Miss Bridgeman and taught others his techniques. Among these was Ann Sullivan, who would become the renowned teacher of Helen Keller.

Bridgeman was born in 1829. At two years of age, a severe bout of scarlet fever left her blind, deaf and with a poor sense of smell. When Dr. Howe heard that such a sensory deprived person lived in his area, he sought her out. At the age of seven, in October of 1837, Laura was brought to the Perkins Institute.

After she learned to communicate by signs, he taught her the twenty-six letters of the alphabet. The achievements of Laura Bridgeman were heralded

throughout the Western world. On July 24, 1839, Laura, for the first time, legibly wrote her own name. Eventually she learned to write and talk, and ultimately helped others with afflictions similar to her own. Throughout the United States, her accomplishments and achievements resulted in the development and growth of institutions for the education of blind, deaf and retarded children.

6

DERMATOGRAPHISM; *Gilbert & Bacon, Philadelphia; 4½ x 5½", Silver Print; 1899.* Skin writing or dermatographism, is one of the most interesting and bizarre medical phenomena. It occurs in states of hypersensitivity, when the skin is touched. Pressure on the skin results in a temporary and localized raised area of swelling. To document this phenomena, this patient had his diagnosis and the year written across his chest by his physicians.

Today we know that almost any immunologic, chemical or physical insult can induce the condition. Food allergy is the most common immunologic cause of the condition.

7

MAN WITH TUMOR BEHIND HEAD; *Barlow, Hatch & Co., American; 4½ x 6½", Albumen Print; c. 1875.* During the earliest era of clinical photography, gross documentation of the patient's disease was most important. Clinical photographs often did not reveal the full extent of the disease, but provided documentation as to the nature of the condition. At the time this photograph was taken, this tumor could be safely excised without danger of infection. As medical science advanced and diagnosis was based more on microscopic findings, the focus of the clinical photograph also changed. It too became more focused on the site of the problem, in this case, the lesion. By the mid-twentieth century, the photograph of importance was not of the patient, but of the pathologic section-slide of the disease. Patients became their disease, and the personal touch was, for the most part, lost in medical care. Only recently has the "holistic" total body and mind approach been restored to diagnosis and treatment.

8

ANACEPHALY — BABY BORN WITHOUT A BRAIN; *Anonymous, American; 4 x 5½", Silver Print; c. 1900.* Deformities of human development have always intrigued mankind. For example, abnormal twinning, unusual body size, and cranial defects have provided us with rich folklore and legends. Scientists have studied these deformities to answer some important questions about human development.

This unfortunate infant was born without a brain. In most cases, because the time for which the rudimentary brain-stem can function is extremely limited, life cannot be sustained beyond a few days. For centuries, these infants were studied and were often preserved as anatomical specimens.

These defects occur early in fetal life and involve abnormal formation of

the neural tube. An improper closure of the neural groove causes the tubular deformation to occur. This child exhibits anacephaly, the most severe form of neural deformity. The hope and promise of therapeutic genetic engineering is the prevention of such developmental defects. The coded abnormal pattern of growth must be altered in order to create normal, healthy individuals. The development of such techniques will be the most important medical therapy of the future. The twenty-first century will see control and treatment of numerous genetic diseases by means of gene reconstruction.

9

GIRL WITH HYDROCEPHALUS; *H. Glosser, Harrisburg, Illinois; 4 x 5½", Albumen Print; c. 1875.* Few deformities of the head demand the attention that hydrocephalus does. In infancy, acquired or congenital brain disease results in the obstruction of fluid circulation in the brain. Thus, pressure builds up. Because the skull bones are not totally fused during early infancy, the pressure results in a ballooning enlargement of the brain and skull. Most of these children died in infancy, as vital areas were compressed.

In the second decade of this century, the neurosurgeon Walter Dandy pioneered the use of X-rays using dye and air injection into the brain. He differentiated two types of hydrocephalus: an obstruction in the ventricular system; and obstruction in areas where there was a communication between the brain and the ventricles. In 1922, Dandy pointed out that treatment of obstructive hydrocephalus required drainage of cerebral spinal fluid. Various therapies were developed to successfully treat hydrocephalus.

10

BRAIN SURGERY; *Anonymous, Baltimore; 5 x 7", Silver Print; 1929.* Brain surgery has always been the most delicate and complicated of all the surgical specialties. Because of the fragility of the inner brain, great expertise is required in diagnosing, handling, and exposing the tissues. This 1929 photograph shows a cranium that has been opened and folded back over the brain. Control of bleeding is achieved by the use of numerous clamps, as well as cautery. The discovery of focal representation of function in the brain, during the 1870s, allowed localization of disease. This, and the advent of modern surgical aseptic techniques, made successful brain surgery possible. On June 21, 1879, William Macewen removed a brain tumor, the first operation of its kind in the United States.

During the second decade of this century, Drs. Harvey Cushing and Walter E. Dandy established the principals for modern neurosurgical technique. This brain operation, photographed on May 2, 1929, shows the pioneering neurosurgical principals of the early twentieth century.

11

LUCIA ZARATE, THE MEXICAN LILIPUTIAN; *Jay Wood, New York City; 2½ x 4", Albumen Print; c. 1880.* The smallest woman known ever to have existed, Lucia Zarate, attained an adult weight of only five pounds, and a height of twenty

inches. Zarate's successful career as an "entertainer" made her one of the highest paid attractions of her era. In 1890, while traveling through the Rocky Mountains, her train was stranded in a blizzard. Zarate died at the age of twenty-six.

The fascination with dwarfs and giants dates from prehistory and fills volumes of mythology and folklore. Dwarfs were especially coveted, and at one time all noble families retained them at court. Because of the special favors bestowed on dwarfs, one of the horrors perpetrated by mercenary parents was the purposeful deforming of normal children by diet and disease. Such "rachitic" children were born normal but subsequently suffered severe arrested development. Natural dwarfs are born small, stay small, and usually can reproduce. Lucia Zarate was a true dwarf.

During the nineteenth century, appearing in circus side-shows was a common way to earn a living for those afflicted with severe deformity or disease. Photographs of "freaks" and other side-show personalities remain a legacy of American social history. Today a more sophisticated population has gradually recognized that such individuals are simply victims of rare genetic disorders or developmental dysfunctions.

12

FAT LADY WALKS; *Eadweard Muybridge, Philadelphia; 8½ x 14½". Heliotype; 1887.* Using twelve cameras and a special trip wire technique, Eadweard Muybridge studied animal and human locomotion. He has earned a unique place in the history of science, since his scientific studies have never been repeated or refuted. His work was so complete, accurate and time consuming, that it comprises more than one hundred thousand photographs. In 1887, Muybridge published eleven volumes with 781 plates, consisting of about twenty thousand photographs. Today, this study of human and animal motion remains a standard reference for artists, photographers, designers, and physicians. Muybridge's studies were rudimentary and pioneering forms of the "motion picture." Working at the University of Pennsylvania, Muybridge studied both normal and abnormal movement. This set of thirty-six images, taken from three view points, shows an obese woman walking across Muybridge's measured track.

13

MAN WITH DEFORMED FEET; *Wendt, New York City; 4½ x 5½", Albumen Print; c. 1885.* Mr. Eugene Berry, seen here at age twenty-three, was born with massive congenital hypertrophic deformities of both feet. He most likely suffered from "multiple enchondroma or exostosis." The condition remained stable throughout his life. His deformity grew as his legs grew, so that his feet remained in the same relative proportion as before. Mr. Berry profited from his abnormality by exhibiting himself at side shows and selling photographs of himself. On the back of this image, the dimensions of his deformity are recorded:

	<i>Right</i>	<i>Left</i>
<i>Ball</i>	<i>2 feet 3 inches</i>	<i>1 foot 5 inches</i>
<i>Instep</i>	<i>2 feet</i>	<i>1 foot 3 inches</i>
<i>Heel</i>	<i>2 feet 2 inches</i>	<i>1 foot 4 inches</i>
<i>Ankle</i>	<i>1 foot 9 inches</i>	<i>9½ inches</i>
<i>Calf</i>	<i>2 feet</i>	<i>1 foot 4 inches</i>
<i>Length</i>	<i>1 foot 8 inches</i>	<i>1 foot 4 inches</i>

14

GANGRENE OF THE LEG IN DIPHTHERIA; *Anonymous, Mt. Sinai Hospital, New York; 4 x 6", Silver Print; c. 1900.* Diphtheria, one of childhood's deadliest diseases, was responsible for the death of tens of thousands of children from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries. Epidemics would at times decimate the greater number of children in a given community. The basic pathology of the disease was a bacterial infection in the throat, which produced a membrane that often choked its victims. Other deadly complications resulted from the toxin produced by the bacteria, which frequently caused inflammations of the blood vessels, and which could affect the heart. Other effects were noted in the liver, and paralysis occurred in 10 to 20% of the cases. One of the rare complications was gangrene. As the toxin spread, the blood vessels carried inflammation through the body. This patient suffered from gangrene diphtheria. Rarely did such patients survive. Death occurred from respiratory obstruction or circulatory failure. The discovery in 1890 of an anti-toxin for diphtheria was a medical triumph. Modern medicine had achieved an effective and specific therapeutic treatment—later a means of immunization, which could be administered as a preventative during childhood controlled the disease. However, the disease still occurs sporadically in America in non-immunized populations.

15

WORLD WAR I SOLDIER WITH AMPUTATED LEG; *Vallee, M. D., Paris, France; 4½ x 6½", Silver Print; March 1917.* Prior to the efforts of physicians during World War I, re-education and rehabilitation of diseased and deformed individuals was not a serious undertaking. This photograph of a wounded serviceman is taken from a monograph published by C. Vallee, Chief of Medicine and Director of the School for the Re-Education of Professionals, in Paris. Vallee documented the re-education of a number of wounded soldiers. His photographs showed them with both their injuries and their prostheses, and while at work. His monograph, entitled, *Considerations sur la Re-Education Professionnelle dans les Industries du Bâtiment* was presented to the French government. In this landmark work, published in the midst of the great war, Vallee proposed the necessity of providing not only a job, but the possibility of a normal life, to the thousands of wounded and deformed soldiers. His effort was the result of increased humanitarian and social consciousness during the early part of the twentieth century.

ORTHODOX JEWISH MAN WITH ACROMEGALY; *Walery Rzenuski, Krakow, Poland; 4 x 5½", Albumen Print; c. 1890.* This image embodies two unusual features: it is a rare clinical photograph of an Orthodox Jew; and it represents a consultation by photography.

The patient is identified as an Orthodox Jew because of the curled lockets of temple hair, called "payos." These and the patient's short haircut indicate that he is probably a member of a Hassidic Sect. Before 1900, Orthodox Jews were seldom photographed because of religious considerations, but with the importance of accurate medical diagnosis and the development of documentary photography as a medical tool, these religious obstacles were overcome.

Comments on the photograph identify the patient as Mojzesz (Moishe) Friedner who suffers "myoxdema." This photograph was most likely taken for consultative purposes, as it carries the stamp of the "Clinic of Doctor G. Riehl" (1855-1943), an 1879 graduate of the Vienna Medical School, became full Professor of Dermatology in 1902, and was a noted diagnostician. The presentation of unusual cases at medical centers is one of the backbones of medicine to this day.

The true diagnosis here may not be myzodema, but "acromegaly" or gigantism, a pituitary gland disease which results in excessive production of growth hormone. Acromegaly was documented in 1886, and it is possible that the doctors treating the patient may not have been familiar with the newly described condition. The enlargement of the hands and feet, as well as the posturing and positioning of the patient is more similar to images of people with acromegaly than those with myxodema.

RECONSTRUCTIVE SURGERY OF THE FACE; *Alice L. Becht, Washington D. C.; 6 x 7", Silver Print; c. 1919.* Trench warfare in World War I resulted in numerous head and facial injuries, as the head and face were the most frequently exposed parts of the body. Shrapnel caused most of the war injuries; projected at high velocity, the particles tore gaping holes in the combatants of both sides. So severe were the wounds incurred that special institutes were established to care for the wounded. Some victims were so badly disfigured that they were compelled to wear face masks in public. Noted sculptors spent years fashioning these masks, so that the soldiers could attempt to lead normal lives.

In the United States, at the Walter Reed U. S. Army General Hospital, special teams of plastic-reconstructive surgeons, working with oral and dental surgeons in the new "Maxillo-Facial Department," devised innovative devices and operative procedures for the facially deformed. In war, new medical treatments which can benefit the general public often are devised. One of the great medical achievements resulting from the care of the wounded of World War I was the development of plastic and reconstructive surgery, an important specialty that eventually offered new therapies to the civilian populations.

WOMAN WITH NODULAR LESIONS IN LATE SYPHILIS; *Dr. J. A. Lacassagne, Leon, France; 5 x 7", Silver Print; c. 1895.* The main concern of dermatologists in the nineteenth century was the differentiation of other skin eruptions from the various forms of syphilis. Indeed, the name of the speciality is officially "Syphilology and Dermatology." Syphilis, the great mimicker, can approximate in appearance other known diseases, and therefore must first be considered and eliminated in diagnosis.

This unfortunate lady has the nodular lesions of late syphilis. These skin eruptions usually appear from five to ten years after the primary infection. They are chronic, hard, painless and slow growing. Although asymptomatic, they are progressively destructive. When scales appear, ulceration follows, which progresses and results in these typical contours, which are specifically indicative of syphilis.

CONGENITAL ICHTHYOSIS — ALLIGATOR SKIN BOY; *Dr. J. A. Lacassagne, Leon, France; 5 x 7", Silver Print; c. 1900.* One of the most fascinating congenital deformities is one that often is characterized, in side-show "freaks," as "alligator skinned." Dr. Lacassagne used a series of artistic photographs of his patient in the case of "Erythrodermie congenital ichthyosiforme de Brocq." The term is derived from the fish-scale-like appearance of the skin. The disease is now differentiated into several variants. In the bullous form, the patient is born with a raw, tender skin, and the disease usually lasts throughout life. The patient in this photograph probably has the milder and more common form, ichthyosis vulgaris. In most cases, the scaly areas are small and isolated. The onset of symptoms is gradual and occurs in early childhood. Over time, the typical cornification of the disease hardens the skin and creates a reptilian scale-like covering over the affected areas. In many cases, the disease disappears during adulthood. Both of these types of ichthyosis are inherited as autosomal dominant traits.

In this boy's case, the disease covers his entire body, except for his face and hands, so that he could have appeared in public with the condition of his skin concealed.

CRIMINALITY AND TATTOO — DR. LACASSAGNE; *Dr. J. A. Lacassagne, Leon, France; 5 x 7", Silver Print; c. 1890.* In 1881, Dr. Lacassagne (1843-1924) presented his masterwork on the meaning of tattoos in society, focusing on the tattoo's implications and its associations with criminality. His book, *Les Tatouages, Etude Anthropologique et Médico Legale*, helped set the groundwork for later researchers in this field. During the nineteenth century, phrenology and physiognomy influenced the ideologies of the medical and scientific establishments. Phrenology, the study of lumps and bumps on the skull, relating them to personality and behavior, was the most important psychiatric conceptual ideology of the time. On the other hand,

physiognomy, the study of facial features and their relationship to personality and character had been used as an analytical tool for centuries. Charles Darwin's 1872 book on emotion and the facial expressions of man and animals expanded the field. Lacassagne's purpose was to correlate the types, positions, styles and wordings of tattoos to various aspects of criminality.

It was not until the nineteen-twenties that many of these studies fell into general disfavor.

21

INMATE LINE, WAVE — JOLIET PRISON; *Anonymous, Joliet, Illinois; 4½ x 8", Silver Print; c. 1895*. Until recent times, incarceration truly meant the absolute loss of one's freedoms. Control of inmates' lives, including their interpersonal contacts, was strictly regulated. This dramatic image demonstrates the "lock step" formation, a close march, that was standard for prisoner control. The lock step position allowed the guards to see both of the prisoners' hands at all times. All aspects of life were restricted, and severe discipline was enforced. Talking was strictly regulated, and eating was arranged so that prisoners had as little contact with each other as possible. They ate face to back, so that no signals could be communicated.

One of a series of images taken at the turn of the century to show off the successful operation of the prison, this recreational workout contrasts sharply with the freedom enjoyed by inmates today. Tower One of Joliet prison dwarfs the runners below. Opened in 1860, the Joliet Correctional Center, a maximum security institution, afforded 640 cells to house 900 inmates. Its walls were 32 feet high and encompassed 30 acres. The grand scale and size of the institution was an important aspect of prisoner control psychology. The idea of these huge Gothic-style edifices was to be awe-inspiring, dwarfing the incarcerated human beings to insignificance. Punishment was readily inflicted, and pillories and whipping posts were standard equipment at most prisons, including Joliet. In 1909, because of brutal and inhumane conditions at the institution, laws were passed that eased crowding and allowed for more humane conditions for prisoners.

22

CHILD ABUSE — A BEATEN BABY; *James W. Black, Boston; 3¼ x 4", Lantern Slide; c.1885*. "Spare the rod and spoil the child" was an American cultural axiom that was often strictly adhered to. Puritanical concepts decreed aloofness from one's children — between thirty and fifty percent would die before the age of twelve from disease anyway. The carefree childhood we now idealize was a late nineteenth century development. Until then children, especially in the lower classes were often treated as property, to do with as one wished. Long hours of work were expected at the earliest possible age.

It was not uncommon to purposefully starve and deform children, breaking bones and healing them in peculiar positions so that they could

earn a living by begging as cripples. Infanticide too was common until the late nineteenth century, with girls as its common target — boys more often being put to work or left to fend for themselves. Abandonment was common and major cities had thousands of so-called “street arabs,” mainly young boys expected to survive on their own.

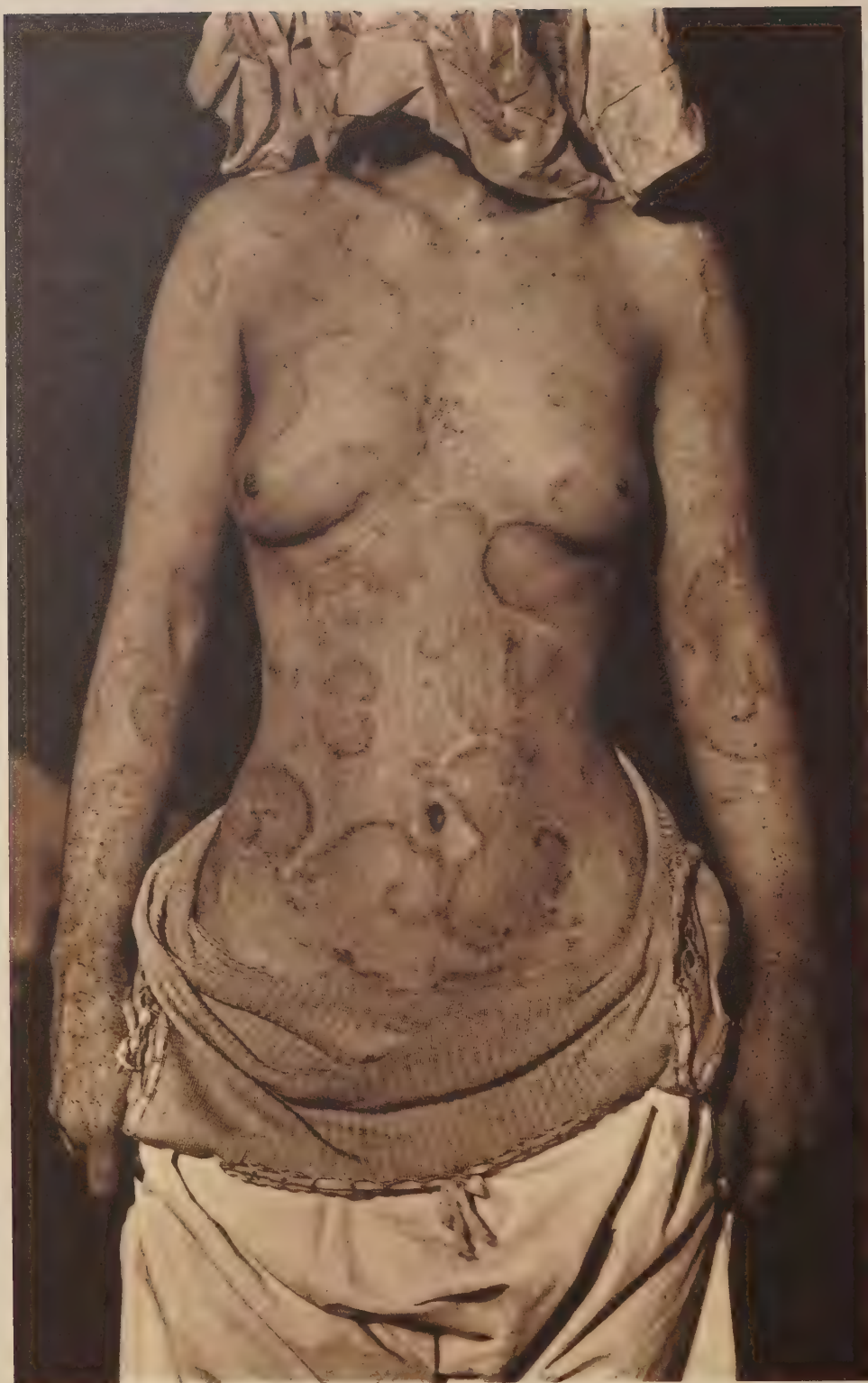
In New York City, one of the daily jobs of the police was to pick up abandoned babies and bring the survivors to Randall’s Island Hospital. In 1889 about 90% of those found died in the hospital; the parents were rarely sought for punishment. In light of this, beatings and other abuse seemed minor. Deadly cruelty toward children was an established way of life and usually went unpunished by law. Organizations such as The Society For The Prevention of Cruelty To Children became active proponents of children’s rights. Photography helped bring about necessary social change, and this picture is one of the images that aroused public awareness.

This photograph was part of a series documenting child beating, poverty and the humanitarian work of a Boston orphan asylum. The asylum sought to change attitudes toward abused and abandoned children. This work may predate the monumental effort of New York’s Jacob Riis who in 1890 published his photographically illustrated book *How the Other Half Lives*. This book helped change government responsibility for social conditions and remains a corner stone of American social welfare reform.

SMALLPOX ISOLATION; *Anonymous, American; 3 x 4", Silver Print; c. 1890.* During this period, the isolation of those with contagious disease was the only effective means of controlling epidemics. Smallpox was the most contagious of all known diseases and one of the most deadly. Until 1800, it was probably responsible for more deaths than any other disease. In the eighteenth century, it was used as germ warfare. American Indian tribes were deliberately infected by means of contaminated gift blankets during the French and Indian Wars. Smallpox devastated armies, more than once changing the course of history. As there is no cure for any of the viral diseases, isolation and vaccination hold the key to eradication and control. In 1979, after an extensive global effort, the last case of smallpox occurred in Somalia. The virus now survives only as a well-protected, deadly laboratory culture.

The man pictured here most likely survived his disease, as only his skin seems to have been affected. Most of those who died from smallpox had the pox in their intestinal track—the so-called “black smallpox,” in which the bleeding from the pox sores in the bowel rapidly proved fatal. The pox went through specific consecutive stages and usually was over in about three weeks. The eradication of smallpox is one of the greatest achievements of twentieth century medicine.

DEATH IN THE ELECTRIC CHAIR; *Anonymous, American; 8 x 12", Silver Print; c. 1935*. Death was a much more familiar aspect of life prior to the twentieth century, and the death penalty, as a part of our legal heritage, was exercised as a natural offshoot of this familiarity with death. This image, taken at the moment before the switch was pulled, shows a convicted murderer about to be electrocuted. In the twentieth century, the fact and evidence of death are concealed, and most people have never seen a dead person, much less an execution. However, until the early twentieth century public executions and beatings were common in America. Whipping provided easy punishment while allowing communities to avoid the expenditures needed to build and maintain prisons. Justice was swift and expedient for both the criminal and the state, while its execution in public provided an example of the instrumentation of legalized "justice."



1. PAISLEY GIRL, *Henry G. Piffard, M. D., New York City, 1891*



2. OZENA, HOLE IN NOSE FROM SYPHILIS, *O. G. Mason, New York City, 1881*



3. YOUNG WOMAN WITH LARGE NOSE, *James Robinson, D. D. S., Dublin, Ireland, c. 1874*



4. LUPUS OF THE FACE WITH CORNEAL INVOLVEMENT, *Dr. J. A. Lacassagne, Leon, France, c. 1895*



5. LAURA BRIDGEMAN, *The first blind and deaf person to be educated in America*, Warrens, Boston, c. 1870



6. DERMATOGRAPHISM, *Gilbert & Bacon, Philadelphia, 1899*



7. MAN WITH TUMOR BEHIND HEAD, *Barlow, Hatch & Co., American, c. 1875*



8. ANACEPHALY — BABY BORN WITHOUT A BRAIN, *Anonymous, American c. 1900*



9. GIRL WITH HYDROCEPHALUS, *H. Glosser, Harrisburg, Illinois, c. 1875*





11. LUCIA ZARATE, THE MEXICAN LILIPUTIAN, *Jay Wood, New York City, c. 1880*



12. FAT LADY WALKS, *Eadweard Muybridge, Philadelphia, 1887*



13. MAN WITH DEFORMED FEET, *Wendt, New York City, c. 1885*



14. GANGRENE OF THE LEG IN DIPHTHERIA, *Anonymous, Mt. Sinai Hospital, New York, c. 1900*



15. WW I SOLDIER WITH AMPUTATED LEG, *C. Vallee, M. D., Paris, France, 1917*



16. ORTHODOX JEWISH MAN WITH ACROMEGALY, *Walery Rzeniuski, Krakow, Poland, c. 1890*





18. WOMAN WITH NODULAR LESIONS IN LATE SYPHILIS, *Dr. J. A. Lacassagne, Leon, France, c. 1895*



19. CONGENITAL ICHTHYOSIS — ALLIGATOR SKIN BOY, *Dr. J. A. Lacassagne, Leon, France, c. 1900*



20. CRIMINALITY AND TATTOO, Dr. J. A. Lacassagne, Leon, France, c. 1890



21. INMATE LINE, WAVE — JOLIET PRISON, *Anonymous, Joliet, Illinois, c. 1895*



22. CHILD ABUSE — A BEATEN BABY, *James W. Black, Boston, c. 1885*



23. SMALLPOX ISOLATION, *Anonymous, American, c. 1890*



24. DEATH IN THE ELECTRIC CHAIR, *Anonymous, American, c. 1935*



ARCHIVING SEXUALITY

The Photographic Collection of the Kinsey Institute

*In that he is an erotic animal, man is a problem for himself.
Eroticism is the problematic part of ourselves.*

Georges Bataille, *L'Erotisme*, 1957

Only recently have scholars attempted to reconcile the tenuous relationship of sexually explicit or erotic and pornographic photographs with the history of the medium itself. Excluded from the category of “legitimate” camera images, the history of erotic and pornographic photography has been repressed in such a way as to suggest it never existed. Indeed, few condemning the contemporary variant have sufficient knowledge or understanding of a genre that closely followed upon photography’s inception in the second quarter of the nineteenth century. That today’s governing moral and aesthetic agents of image-making have categorically rejected society’s fascination with sexual imagery is not surprising. Perennially, the erotic photographic image has aroused the wrath of self-righteous opponents, to be labeled “obscene,” “immoral,” and “sinful.” At the same time, however, the production and consumption of such images flourished among all classes of society in many parts of the Western world. As Charles Baudelaire wrote in 1859:

It was not long before thousands of pairs of greedy eyes were glued to the peepholes of the stereoscope, as though they were the skylights of the infinite. The love of obscenity, which is as vigorous a growth in the heart of natural man as self-love, could not let slip such a glorious opportunity for its own satisfaction.¹

Baudelaire’s dictum challenging scopic fixation was one of the earliest to mark the boundaries effectively distinguishing the attraction of erotic imagery from its more mainstream and acceptable counterpart. In condemning photography, Baudelaire was contrasting the medium unfavorably with the traditional arts, painting and sculpture. To Baudelaire photography, which harnessed the unmediated and superfluous reality of “live” sexual action, was unacceptable for its unquestionable power to stimulate and arouse. Photography offered these “greedy eyes” the revelation of sexual difference, and made the act of sex accessible for personal viewing.

The images selected from the collections of The Kinsey Institute evidence society’s “love of obscenity” and erotic photography’s subcultural prominence that permeates its fabric. One of the largest archives of its kind, The Kinsey Institute’s collection of photography underscores the importance of sexual imagery as a means for understanding alternative behaviors, and the photograph’s role as sexual fetish and commodity. While the images selected here demonstrate the breadth and diversity of sexuality and the manifold

variety of erotic fascination, this collection also reflects upon the intervention by institutions into our sexual lives begun two centuries earlier. Photographs like those selected here afford one the opportunity to question this intervention, while at the same time they beg for understanding and explication of how and why they were created. Like the motion picture and video which followed, the advent of the daguerreotype, *carte de visite*, and stereoscopic photograph were all quickly appropriated by and for the public for illicit sexual purposes. Yet there is something inherently more profound about the photographs selected here than the implications of pornography brought forth by the intensive cultural and theoretical debates that have characterized discourse on the subject. The depth that characterize many of these photographic images often belie the interpretive constructs proffered by the innumerable “experts” of pornographic and erotic photography.² And as social participants of the late-twentieth century we have an obligation to confront these profundities, which often manifest themselves as arousal, desire, shame and disgust.

Nearly a decade before the formal establishment of The Institute for Sex Research (now called The Kinsey Institute) in 1947, Dr. Alfred C. Kinsey had envisioned the development of a visual archive that would compliment his inquiry into all facets of sexuality. Kinsey and his staff were interested not only in heterosexual practices, but also in those long considered by mainstream America, and indeed the medical and psychological establishment, to be “abnormal,” “decadent,” and “perverse.” In fact, at the risk of downgrading heterosexuality, and in the face of the greatest adversity, Kinsey refused to confine the Institute’s archival collecting to representations of “normal” sexual behavior.

Kinsey sought to quantify statistical evidence about individuals and their sexual behavior gathered during a lengthy question-and-answer process, well-known today as the “Kinsey interview.” At the Institute’s offices in Bloomington, Indiana and during his staff’s trips to New York, Los Angeles, San Francisco and Chicago, thousands of volunteer participants were asked to respond to a series of questions concerning their sexual history. Describing it as Kinsey’s most “brilliant creation,” Paul Robinson noted that the interview was a “tour de force in which every scrap of sexual information available to memory was wrenched from the subject in less than two hours.”³ In aggregate, this information later culminated in the publication of Kinsey’s two widely sold, and controversial, volumes, *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male* (1948) and *Sexual Behavior in the Human Female* (1953). Having personally interviewed nearly 8,000 participants, Kinsey was one of the first professionals to document the sexual histories of lesbians, gays, bisexuals, transvestites, and others with marginalized sexual interests.⁴

Although Kinsey was attempting to challenge the prevailing discourse on sex, the mythologies, the stereotypes, and the fears that had been propagated by the medical, psychological, and sociological intervention into human sexuality, we must question his ability to escape the ideologies that so informed research to that time. Modernism, the modern era, and what

Robinson called the “modernization of sex,” are uniquely bound to the ascendancy of the bourgeois, capitalist and industrial society that still possesses a vested interest in documenting, categorizing and accounting sexuality. As Michel Foucault reminds us with his provocative observations concerning the relationships of power, pleasure and knowledge in the modern era, “toward the beginning of the eighteenth century there emerged a political, economic, and technical incitement to talk about sex.”⁵ This “incitement,” according to Foucault, found its historical grounding in the Western ritual of confession, that later manifest itself in eighteenth-century pedagogy, and nineteenth-century medicine, in the form of the personal history and the professional consultation — easily seen today as the precedents to the Sexological interview. According to Foucault, “a great archive of the pleasures of sex was gradually constituted,” later solidified by the institutions of medicine, psychiatry and psychoanalysis.⁶ Kinsey’s efforts, although distanced from his predecessors Richard von Krafft-Ebbing, Havelock Ellis, and Sigmund Freud, may nevertheless be viewed today in the context of the emerging institutional discourse about sex.

To understand the breadth of sexual representation manifest in the Institute’s archive of photography, it is important to note the extent of Kinsey’s quest for radical and often controversial sexual data. For example, he also systematically searched for, gathered information about, and interviewed incarcerated individuals, pedophiles, fetishists and sadomasochists. There was seemingly no sexual domain that Kinsey was not willing to investigate and observe in order to have first hand knowledge of its behavior.

Photography was uniquely significant to Kinsey’s research as a documentary tool that could provide the most complete record of sexual activity. Preceding the landmark research of William Masters and Virginia Johnson, Kinsey pioneered the production of still photographs and live-action films whenever such rare opportunities were presented. While the historical images are the *sin qua non* of the archive of photography, Kinsey’s own enthusiastic photographic activity reveals the range of interests of the Institute’s collection under his direction. For example, Kinsey accepted an invitation to observe a gay orgy in the New York apartment of a prominent literary figure.⁷ As the several men made love, Kinsey moved about the room directing his cameraman to photograph the variety of acts taking place. As with the Kinsey interview, objectivity was a hallmark of these photographic sessions. Recalling his demeanor, Glenway Wescott wrote that Kinsey, “trained himself not even to look interested...” in his researches.⁸ Wescott’s observation is not extraordinary. Earlier the writer had recorded in his journal that, “Kinsey is a strange man, with a handsome good sagacious face but with a haunted look-fatigue, concentration, and (surprising to me, if I interpret rightly) [he is] passionless and indeed [without] sensuality.”⁹ Kinsey’s desire to record every detail, and his revolutionary approach to gathering personal and confidential information, doubtless helped to enrich the archive of photography, and to influence the process for cataloguing this material.

The collection of photography grew impressively in the first years

following Kinsey's early publications. Containing over 75,000 photographs, the collection's earliest images date from the 1870s to the present, but a majority of photographs are from the period between the 1880s and the first two decades of the twentieth-century. In addition to the photographs clearly emanating from commercial studio production, a large portion of images found in the Institute are naïve snapshots. In many of these photographs the context of production and the conditions under which they were viewed are much less than certain. In many ways these images present a significant challenge to the contemporary theorization that has marked scholarship of erotic and pornographic photography. Representative images from the margins of both society and sexuality, as well as the prolific Victorian snapshot documenting the "secret" life of sex, have often eluded critical analysis. As personal images they possess an unequaled documentary quality that reveal unique perspectives on human sexuality.

The development of the first hand cameras in the 1880s, for example the "Facile," and the Kodak Falcon, combined with the invention of roll film during the same period, created an explosion of amateur photographers, and with them the first "snapshots" of personal acts of sexuality. With the rise of urbanization, industrialization, and the problems associated with the large cities, the hand camera gave photographers, amateur and professional alike, new opportunities to capture "live" and spontaneous action. As the waning years of the *belle époque* approached, the hand camera offered new independence and individuality for photographers. It is therefore not difficult to conceive the potential temptations for erotic or pornographic applications that were presented by the developments in camera equipment. Of the first to capitalize on the hand camera was Paul Martin (1864-1942), who recalled the "thrill" of taking snaps in this era.¹⁰ Although Martin was referring to the execution of images without his object's knowledge, his observation speaks of the arousal afforded by new camera technologies.

The personal snapshots may tell us more about the nexus of modern life and the new interest in recording sexuality that began to imbue society. In the hands of a capable practitioner, the camera became not only the observing, voyeuristic eye, but presumably also a mechanical device that heightened the erotic event.¹¹ That the erotic and pornographic snapshot often contains the semblance of "typical" members of society, and not the glamorized or stereotyped model, nor the trappings of the commercial studio, provides a mystery that defies cursory analysis. Many of these images circulated within the domain of a particular subculture, but how many did not circulate at all, and became the *memento mori* of a particular personal adventure or encounter? What do we know about the transvestite, made up in drag, and preparing for the evening ball, or the male and female couple, nude and embracing behind her diaphanous veil? Who are the dapper gentlemen in tweed, one masturbating the other as they stand upright in a field? And in whose car were the young couple making love, and how did *they* come to be photographed? These are questions that standard histories and analyses can never answer.

If we follow Foucault's assessment of the modern era we may see in these personal snapshots, as well as the commercially produced photographs created for wide distribution, documents of the transgression of collective moralities, established law and "normal" sexual behavior. We may see in these photographs the problematic that Georges Bataille located in both his theoretical writing on eroticism, and the transgressions represented in his pornographic contributions as well.¹² Eroticism is the problem of problems, and if it is unsolvable, one can only live and play with it. Are not the preponderance of images from the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries related to the sado-erotic play or *mise en abyme* that form the literary legacy that Bataille inherited? There is a literary tradition in pornography that may find its transgressive counterpart in the photographic image. Evidenced in such works as the Comte de Lautreamont's *Les Chants des Maldoror*, and Guillaume Apollinaire's *The Debauched Hospodar*, to the writings and proclamations on surrealism by André Breton, are the pervasive influence of the Marquis de Sade and Leopold von Sacher-Masoch. Susan Rubin Suleiman has characterized these literary transgressions and erotic play as a metaphor for both life and living.¹³ In the erotic and pornographic photograph we find a visual analog.

Modern society and the photographic technologies that fostered the new interest in classifying, documenting and recording sexuality brought forth a discomforting element, simultaneously present, that pornographic and erotic images force us to confront. Capitalism and the ascending bourgeois culture made it only a matter of time before production methods would be applied to photography, thus allowing for massive dissemination of erotic and pornographic imagery. Sophisticated machinery, such as that developed by Automatic Photographs of New York, and Loescher & Petsch, Berlin, for example, made possible the production of 147,000 cabinet sized bromide prints in a single day.¹⁴ To understand the enormous market for commercially produced imagery one need only to recall the London *Times* report of 1874, in which over 130,000 photographs deemed to be obscene were confiscated by the police.¹⁵

As commercial studios rushed to exploit increasing demand, would-be *acteurs* were sought and procured. The unsavory response to commercially produced pornographic and erotic photographs, in which the presumable desires of an exclusively male, heterosexual viewing audience were typically privileged, has more than a passing relationship to the photograph's proximity to prostitution. With very few original documents, we can only conjecture on the willingness of models to engage in staged sexual acts for the camera. However, the human body in the modern era acquired exchange value as a sought after commodity, and it is fair to hypothesize that men and women were paid for their sexual efforts, and therefore were a class of prostitute. Given these relationships the photograph is then wrapped up in a "mutual degradation" with both money and prostitution.¹⁶ The prostitute, having been rendered a *déclassé* and undesirable member of society, then, became part of what Foucault called the "sub-race race," those otherwise known as the

streetwalkers, social ramblers, hustlers, and the incorrigibles.¹⁷ And it is the rise of this class of citizen that fosters new categorizations and specifications of both perversity and individuality.

T.J. Clark has written that prostitution, “represents the danger or the price of modernity; it says things about capital which are shocking.”¹⁸ The erotic photograph or “academic” nude, often guised as the *grisette*, *odalesque*, or *grand cocotte*, and situated in the context of the harem, bath or *chamber de toilette*, opened the doors for more explicit sexual acts for the camera. The often playful representation of young women offered in various states of undress, as *décolletés*, *décorsetés* or *déshabillés* and men offered as *académien*, gave way to more hardened, courser depictions of raw sexuality. Distanced from the championed Storyville images of E. J. Bellocq (1873-1949) and the brothel photographs found in Brassai’s (1899-1984) *Paris de Nuit*, the mainstay of commercial photographs of women, and men, engaged in the most explicit sexual acts, describe a netherworld of sexual commodities, who were cast aside by society. What issues forth in many of these photographs are the hallmarks of degradation and self-loathing, seen quite clearly in the actors’ faces. We find neither the traces of ecstasy or pleasure that are associated with intimacy. They are sexual automatons, whose cold, sterile actions for the camera embody a dominating cultural flaw of modernity. They make palpable the visceral demarcation between ‘fucking’ and ‘making love.’ In the late-twentieth century we are forced to confront these images with a mixture of compassion and disgust, outrage and perplexity.

The modern discourse on sex and the new classifications for dealing with perversity and individuality tempt critical analysis of Kinsey’s motives and the means by which this visual resource evolved. In the late-twentieth century we should begin to view Kinsey’s ordering and classification system in the context of the proliferation of photographic archives, well used by this time in the realms of science, law enforcement, and medicine. Taxonomic systems, not unlike that Kinsey devised for the archive of photography, were employed as a means for surveillance and to control the problems of urbanization, and the population of “undesirables,” like the criminal, the insane, and the diseased. Photographic archives were also developed for “ethnographic” purposes during the colonialization of non-Western lands, primarily for controlling information about non-White, non-European cultures.¹⁹ The photograph, employed as a document, derived its medical, scientific, and in this case, sexological significance from the institutional development of the archive.²⁰ As Alan Sekula has written, “Increasingly, photographic archives were seen as central to a bewildering range of empirical disciplines, ranging from art history to military intelligence.”²¹ Photography, utilized in the archive, helped define the typology of social undesirability and the narrow margins of society.

For Kinsey, the archive of photography was a documentary source exemplifying his own “preoccupation with ...common deviance,” and his steadfast interest in understanding sexual diversity.²² Kinsey’s goal was to collect adequate photographic representation of *every* form of sexual behavior.

Kinsey had opportunities to observe male and female autoeroticism, heterosexual intercourse, and intercourse between men. It is fair to suppose that had opportunities existed to observe the extremely marginalized sexual subcultures, Kinsey would have seized them. In any case, photographic representations of these behaviors were equally important to the archive. As a visual resource for sexological study, Kinsey tested the archive's capacity to classify sexuality, carefully scrutinizing little else but the physical act depicted in the image.

A central question that might be posed today is: How would this material be used by Kinsey? More important, perhaps, is what prevented its misuse, given the context of the 1940s and 1950s puritan American morality. Parallels drawn between the collection of these photographs and those made in the classification of the insane and the criminal suggest that the records were used to denote sexual "deviance." In other hands, it is easy to conceive of a collection such as the Institute's being appropriated by police and other law enforcement agencies for purposes of control. Where this analogy fails, however, is that Kinsey was confronted nearly all of the time by the most intense political, social and religious adversaries.

Kinsey was interested primarily in the physical aspects of sexuality, and tolerance was the fundamental tenet of his research. He was interested in accumulating data on sexual variation and the archive of photography developed into a unique resource ordered by sexual classification. The methodology Kinsey employed in his research has more than a passing relationship to the order and content of the Institute's archive of photography. For example, shocking to many was Kinsey's democratic treatment of the various ways in which males could achieve sexual release, outlined in his first volume in 1948. Included, in order of treatment, were masturbation, nocturnal emissions, heterosexual petting, heterosexual intercourse, and intercourse with other species. There is a corresponding relationship between these sexual "outlets" and their representation in the archive of photography. While Kinsey acknowledged that transvestitism, necrophilia, fetishism and sadomasochism were statistically insignificant in his surveys, he sought for representative images of these behaviors as well.²³

Ironic, and certainly in contrast to many of the photographic archives created earlier, are the relationships that Kinsey developed with the police departments of several metropolitan cities. At a time when the institutions of law enforcement had long realized the surveillance potential that photographic archives offered, Kinsey negotiated the transfer of "obscene" and "pornographic" materials that were seized through police confiscation. Police confiscation by the most important urban departments in the country, of highly explicit and diverse sexual material was carried out jointly with the United States Postal Service. When large parcels of photographic images were seized, Kinsey's agreement with the various departments cooperating with him made it possible for the Institute to receive these materials for scholarly viewing.

Clearly, Kinsey's interests in erotic and sexually explicit photography were

indiscriminate. During the first years of the 1950s until his death in 1956, thousands of commercial and non-commercial photographs entered the archive, donated largely by anonymous photographers and the country's most important police departments. Regardless of content, quality or aesthetic merit, any photograph containing erotic elements or representing sexual behavior was accepted into the Institute's collection.

In a rare statement that addressed the photographic archive, as well as the Institute's vast holdings of erotica in various media, Kinsey made his intentions quite clear. Considering this statement today, however, we must place Kinsey in the context of the larger project of sexual archives that Foucault characterized. Responding to the U.S. Customs seizure of Institute material in 1950, which later culminated in a major legal battle, Kinsey wrote:

*The Institute for Sex Research, at Indiana University, explains that it has inevitably had to gather data and materials which, under other circumstances and in other places, would be considered obscene. Investigators of human sex behavior have always had to deal with these things. Otherwise it would be impossible to understand the full reality of human sexual interests and behavior.*²⁴

As the archive of photography grew, the Institute could boast of the largest collection of its kind anywhere in the world. The emergence of sexual categories and specifications fostered a new dictionary of sexual names, and these bore a significant relationship to Kinsey's cataloguing efforts.²⁵ Counted among the images represented in the archive by 1956 were a large number of late-nineteenth-century and early-twentieth-century photographs of "lesbian" behavior; "ethnographic" images that today one might term colonial nudes; "medical" photographs of the sexually anomalous, i.e. "hermaphrodites" and "gynecomasts"; images of transvestites; representations of sexual fetishes, i.e. leather, shoes, hair; and photographic images of bestiality. Kinsey also developed relationships with well-known art photographers who were exploring sexual themes in their work. In addition to one of the largest collections of male nudes by George Platt Lynes (1907-1955), the Institute owns representative images by Clarence John Laughlin (1905-1985), Douglas Kirkland, Judy Dater, and Joel-Peter Witkin. Other prominent collections include work by Baron Wilhelm von Gloeden (1856-1931), Lehnert & Landrock, Manassé, Bruce of Los Angeles and Bob Mizer.

Notwithstanding the creation of this unique resource of sexual representation, Kinsey's archival system inadvertently overlooked many of the important issues with which historians of photography are presently concerned. Kinsey, and others, presumed that these bits of photographic "evidence" represented behavioral "truth" and "reality," never considering the circumstances under which the images were made. Indeed, few of the images have undergone comprehensive study to determine the period and location from which they originate, nor the political, social and commercial

implications for their creation. Like the “Kinsey Scale,” in which a person’s sexual orientation was assigned a degree between the poles of heterosexuality and homosexuality, each image in the archive maintained a quantifiable position. A positivist approach to cataloguing the archive fostered the development of classifications that related simply to the sexual acts represented. A complicated code was employed by Kinsey’s archivists that emphasized gender first, and then the sexual act itself, or the featured genital or anatomical element. This system would have certainly aided the researcher interested in the physical aspects of sexuality. But it revealed little of the context of production and the motivations for viewing this material.

To understand any of those images selected from The Kinsey Institute one must retrieve the context of observation lost in the archive. Whether the photograph represents a staged act for mass-production and distribution, or a real event captured in the snapshot, is important, but perhaps less so than isolating the power of the image—that is, the engagement the viewer had with the photograph itself, and its efficacy to arouse. What were the conditions under which these images were seen? And who were the viewers? Analyses dealing with the erotic or sexually explicit image have largely focused on the model of the male heterosexual viewer. Doubtless, the majority of erotic and pornographic photographs were indeed made for and by heterosexual men, from the late-nineteenth century to the present day. The same period, however, is also marked by the mass-production and distribution of images by and for homosexual men, transvestites, fetishists and other marginalized groups whose sexual orientation and participation in representation is not always so easy to determine.

While the feminist revision of the history of erotic and pornographic photography can be mapped out with a vast number of images, these analyses tend to overlook the pleasures of viewing presumably enjoyed by female and other non-heterosexual viewers. Carole S. Vance succinctly pointed out that in this particular moment in history:

We need to offer an alternative frame for understanding images, one that rejects literalist constructions and offers in their place multiplicity, subjectivity, and the diverse experience of the viewer.²⁶

While Vance was concerned with the contemporary variant of sexually explicit and erotic images, and the ease with which these images are discounted as “obscene” and “immoral,” her remark suggests ways for interpreting historical images like those found in The Kinsey Institute. As we approach the *fin de siècle*, there is an impending need to reconsider the attitudes, biases, and prejudices we project onto those unlike ourselves. Sexual expression and identity, long a target for those who would control or eradicate “abnormal” behavior, requires our understanding and inquiry. Without consideration, images like those selected from The Kinsey Institute, and their contemporary variants, will continue to make viewers uneasy and to

thwart intelligent response. The photographs selected here are instructive because they demonstrate a fascination with recording sexuality and eroticism that transcends race, class, and sexual orientation. The commercial photographs suggest the widespread interest in sexual imagery, and the entrepreneurial zeal to satiate its demand. Likewise, the non-commercially produced photographs reflect the human quest for pleasure, satisfaction and curiosity heightened with new advances in photography. Regardless of their domain, these photographs are of lasting importance as documents to anyone concerned with the societal conditions which prompted and allowed for their creation.

James Crump

NOTES

1 Charles Baudelaire, "The Modern Public and Photography," reprinted in *Classic Essays on Photography*, (ed.) Alan Trachtenberg, notes by Amy Weinstein Meyers (New Haven, CT: Leete's Island Books), p. 87. This often quoted passage has been variously interpreted by scholars of photography. As Trachtenberg points out, Baudelaire's criticism of photography is more encompassing than simply the medium's appropriation for illicit, pornographic purposes, witnessed by the profusion of stereographic daguerreotype images of explicit sexual acts and female nudes. Rather, Baudelaire was distraught by the public's acceptance of an art form mechanically reproduced. Grant B. Romer posited that it was precisely the high demand for erotic stereographic daguerreotypes that Baudelaire was referring, while Gerald Needham argued for a metaphorical as well as literal reading of this passage. See Grant B. Romer, *Die Erotische Daguerreotypie: Sammlung Uwe Scheid* (Weingarten: Kunstverlag Weingarten, 1989, pp. 14-15; and Gerald Needham, "Manet, 'Olympia' and Pornographic Photography," in *Women as Sex Object: Studies in Erotic Art 1730-1970* (eds.) Thomas B. Hess and Linda Nochlin (New York: Newsday Books, 1972), pp. 81-89

2 The debate regarding the "problem" of pornography in film and photography is well documented in the exhaustive technical, theoretical, and polemical literature dealing with the subject. While an inclusive bibliography is well beyond the scope of this essay, consultation with one of the more frequently cited volumes or essays dealing with the topic reveals the extent to which pornography is both reviled and championed by participants in the debate. For an extensive bibliography see Linda Williams, *Hard Core: Power, Pleasure and the "Frenzy of the Visible,"* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1989). It should also be noted that the debate about pornography has been profoundly informed by the feminist movement, whose constituents represent two camps, either for or against the censorship of such imagery. For an overview of this schism see F.A.C.T. Book Committee, *Caught Looking: Feminism, Pornography and Censorship* (New York: Caught Looking, Inc., 1986)

3 Paul Robinson, *The Modernization of Sex: Havelock Ellis, Alfred Kinsey, William Masters and Virginia Johnson* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1976, 1989), p. 50. That Robinson generalized the duration of Kinsey's interviews trivializes the process, and significantly discounts the efforts of days, and sometimes weeks, that went into collecting sexual information from particular interview participants. Some of these protracted sessions are recalled in Wardell B. Pomeroy, *Dr. Kinsey and the Institute for Sex Research* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1982).

4 *ibid.*, p. 4.

5 Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality, Volume I: An Introduction*, translated from the French by Robert Hurley (New York: Vintage, 1990), p. 24. Foucault's important work defines an inextricable relationship between the development of sexological archives and the classification of "perverse," "abnormal," and "immoral" sexual behaviors. While I do not argue that Kinsey's methodologies, ideologies, and intellectual interests fully subscribe to the historical discourse on sex that developed two centuries earlier, there can be no question that they were significantly informed by this discourse.

6 *ibid.*, p. 63-64. "Western societies thus began to keep an indefinite record of these people's pleasures. They made up a herbal of them and established a system of classification."

7 Pomeroy (1982), p. 175.

8 Glenway Wescott, *Continual Lessons: The Journals of Glenway Wescott 1937-1955*, (ed.) Robert Phelps with Jerry Rosco (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1990), p. 346

9 *ibid.*, p. 245.

10 Paul Martin, *Victorian Snapshots*, with an introduction by Charles Howard; illustrated from Contemporary Photographs (New York: Charles Scribner's and Sons, 1939), facsimile reprinted by The Literature of Photography Series (eds.) Peter C. Bunnell and Robert A. Sobieszek (New York: Arno Press, 1973), p. 22.

11 Historically, the camera can be placed within a succession of optical devices that informed the act of looking and the concomitant pleasures of spectatorship. For a provocative study of these relationships see Jonathan Crary, *Techniques of the Observer: On Vision and Modernity in the Nineteenth Century*, An OCTOBER Book (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1990). Crary, however, only alluded to the issue of eroticism fostered by the viewer's participation with technology. Recently, Linda Williams extended Crary's work, looking precisely at the genre of pornography and the participating viewer's body in relationship to the prevailing optical technologies. See William's essay,

"The Erotics of Observers: Visual Pornography and the 'Carnal Density of Vision'" in (ed.) Patrice Petro, *Visual Culture*, a symposium sponsored by The Center for Twentieth Century Studies, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, April 23, 1992 (Bloomington, IN: The Indiana University Press, in press). I wish to thank Linda Williams for sharing her essay with me in advance of its publication.

12 George Bataille, *L'Erotisme* (Paris: Les Editions de Minuit, 1957). see also Bataille *Story of the Eye*, New York, Urizen Books, 1977.

13 Susan Rubin Suleiman, *Subversive Intent: Gender, Politics and the Avant-Garde* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990.), pp. 1-5. According to Rubin Suleiman, for Bataille, "transgression was an 'inner experience' in which an individual—or, in the case of certain ritualized transgressions such as sacrifice or collective celebration, a community—exceeded the bounds of rational, everyday behavior, which is constrained by considerations of profit, productivity, and self-preservation" (p. 75). Rubin Suleiman locates the contradictory feelings of intense pleasure and anguish that form what Bataille called the "inner experience" of eroticism.

14 William Welling, *Photography in America: The Formative Years, 1839-1900* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1978), pp. 362-363.

15 Stephen Heath, *The Sexual Fix*, (New York: Schocken Books, 1984), p. 110.

16 For a provocative explication of the relationship between money and the prostitute in the modern era see Georg Simmel, *The Philosophy of Money*, translated by Tom Bottomore and David Frisby (London and Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1978), pp.370-78.

17 Foucault, (1990), p. 40.

18 T.J. Clark, *The Painting of Modern Life: Paris in the Art of Manet and His Followers* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1985), p. 103. Clark takes up the issue of prostitution in Paris during the 1860s in his landmark essay on Manet's painting, "Olympia."

19 Sander Gilman has written extensively on the use of photographs to order, control, and stereotype marginalized populations from both Western and non-Western cultures. See Gilman, *The Face of Madness: Hugh W. Diamond and the Origin of Psychiatric Photography* (New York: Brunner/Mazel, 1976); Gilman, *Difference and Pathology: Stereotypes of Sexuality, Race, and Madness* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1985); Gilman, *Disease and Representation: Images of Illness From Madness to AIDS* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1988). For an excellent discussion on the use of photographs to promote and propagandize the colonialization of non-Western and non-industrialized lands, and the creation of racial stereotypes of non-Western inhabitants and their cultures see Keith McElroy, "Popular Education and Photographs of the Non-Industrialized World, 1885-1915," *exposure*, vol. 28, No. 3, (1992), 34-51. McElroy discusses a particular type of photographic and commodity archive known as the "School Museum."

20 Alan Sekula, "The Body and the Archive," reprinted in *The Contest of Meaning: Critical Histories of Photography*, (ed.) Richard Bolton (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1989), pp. 343-389, see especially p. 373.

21 Sekula, (1989), 373.

22 Paul Robinson, (1976, 1989), 55.

23 Alfred Kinsey, et al., *Sexuality in the Human Male*, (Philadelphia, Saunders, 1948), p. 157.

24 Cornelia V. Christenson, *Kinsey: A Biography* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1971), p. 152. The legal battle that ensued this statement is better known as *U.S. v. 31 Photographs*, 156 F. Supp. 350 (1957). For the most intelligent discussion detailing the events leading to the case see Kenneth R. Stevens, "The Kinsey Customs Case and Constitutional Law," in *We the People: Indiana and the United States Constitution*, lectures in observance of the bicentennial of the Constitution, (Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Society, 1987), pp. 55-67.

25 Foucault, (1990), p. 43. Perversions were accorded "baptismal names" according to Foucault. "There were Krafft-Ebbing's zoophiles and zoerasts, Rohleder's auto-monosexualists; and later mixoscopophiles, gynecomasts, presbyophiles, sexoesthetic inverts, and dyspareunist women."

26 Carole S. Vance, "The Pleasure of Looking: The Attorney General's Commission on Pornography versus Visual Images," in *The Critical Image: Essays on Contemporary Photography*, (ed.) Carol Squiers (Seattle: Bay Press, 1990), p. 57























DANGERS OF THE INDIAN COUNTRY.

Frontier Exposures.



























PSYCHIATRIC PHOTOGRAPHY IN VICTORIAN ENGLAND

Psychiatrists began using photography within a few years of its invention. Fox-Talbot developed the calotype negative process in 1839. By 1852 the English psychiatrist Hugh W. Diamond was lecturing to a London audience on "Types of Insanity," illustrating his talk with his own photographs of patients in the Surrey County Asylum, of which he was then superintendent. Diamond was, of course, pursuing the tradition of physiognomic diagnosis, established a century earlier by the French alienist Lavater and pursued subsequently by his countryman Esquirol. In this view, each type of mental disorder was associated with specific and potentially definable facial characteristics, and it was the physician's "art to find the mind's construction in the face," as Shakespeare said. In fact, as late as 1888 the Italian psychiatrist Lombroso described "criminal types" thus: "The lips of violators of women and murders are fleshy, swollen and protruding, as in negroes. Swindlers have thin straight lips....Criminals rarely have normal dentition....the chin in criminals is often small and receding as in children, or excessively long, short or flat as in apes."¹

Diamond contended that photographs provided a more accurate, objective image than the previously available illustrational techniques (lithography, wood engraving, etching) afforded. As he put it in his 1856 lecture to the Royal Society, "The Photographer secures with unerring accuracy the external phenomena of each passion, as the really certain indication of internal derangement, and exhibits to the eye the well known sympathy which exists between the diseased brain and the organs and features of the body."²

Apart from their scientific value within the physiognomic tradition, Diamond proposed three uses for the photographs of the "insane." First, and most evident, was their value in record-keeping, preserving an "objective" image of the patient on admission to the hospital and as a means of documenting stages of progress in treatment. Secondly, they could prove useful as a therapeutic instrument in themselves, by confronting the patients with the visual evidence of their initial disordered state as a contrast to the manifestations of their clinical improvement. Finally, for the dangerous patient who escaped the hospital, the photographs could be of service to the police in their efforts to find truants and return them to the protective shelter of the asylum.

Diamond's innovation proved to be both impressive and influential. By 1856 his photographs were being exhibited in a photographic exhibition in Paris. In 1857 a lithograph based on a clinical photograph was used to illustrate a psychiatric text by the French psychiatrist Morel, and a number of hospitals soon began using photographs for record-keeping purposes as Diamond had proposed. However, not until 1876 were actual photographs of the mentally ill used to illustrate a medical text. In that year, Henri Dagonet published, in his "Nouveau Traité Elementaire et Pratique de Maladies Mentales," eight plates of photographs reproduced by the new photoengraving

process, illustrating “33 types of the insane.” Notably, however, four years earlier, in 1872, Charles Darwin had made similar use of photographs (some supplied by another English psychiatrist-photographer, James Crichton-Browne) to illustrate his “The Expression of Emotions in Man and Animals.” In both cases the photographic illustration was intended to provide the most truthful, accurate, and reliable representation of nature.

The idea that the photograph provided such evidence was an article of faith in the 19th century, both in science and in the popular mind. The fact that the available technology required that the subject hold his expression for a considerable time during the process did not, at first, weaken this conviction. In the case of Darwin, the fact that a number of the photos he used were actually posed by professional models did not, he believed, undermine their evidential value. And, indeed, more recent investigators like Paul Ekman³ have found that such posed photographic representations can be accurately and consensually read by persons of widely different cultural backgrounds, supporting Darwin’s view of the universality and biological foundation of the expression of basic emotions.

It is in this context that the photographs in the present collection were made. Apparently the administrators of a now unknown English mental hospital decided to follow Diamond’s recommendations and to use photographs as a part of the admitting record of their patients. What we see here, therefore, is a selection from among the 96 record cards of 1875-77 in this archival collection, chosen by Joel-Peter Witkin as the most interesting and representative of the group.

In each of the 96 photographs, a frontal (usually above-the-waist) shot, appearing to be a straightforward, artless, naturalistic image, is surrounded by identifying data including name, place of residence, presenting symptoms and/or behaviors, predisposing or precipitating factors and diagnosis. In short, these are simple, compact records providing a baseline statement about the patient and the reasons for his or her hospitalization. For us they provide a graphic representation of important aspects of psychiatric theory and practice in mid-19th century England. But beyond that, their often-faded sepia tones and their period costumes arouse in us a certain nostalgia and a curiosity about the lives of these unknown persons, many ordinary-looking, some strange and bizarre. Although they were undoubtedly intended as “scientific” documents, the years have lent them an aura of mystery, transforming them into stimuli for our own fantasy.

Of all, the most memorable, perhaps, is the one of the person of whom least is known. Only her name identifies Emma Horne, who confronts us in a symmetrically frontal view, stern, unsmiling, wrapped carefully in her shawl like one of Edward Curtis’ noble savages. Her expression is a melding of sorrow and anger, lips sealed, brow furrowed, withheld. Is the absence of identifying data the consequence of her proud, guarded silence? We would, if we could, pluck out the heart of her mystery, but neither she nor her keepers have permitted us to do so.

And what of poor Louise Blaney, who in her “acute mania” used “very bad

language” and “swore at everyone”? She was apparently so agitated that, alone of the group, she needed to be sedated with “40 grains” (a whopping dose) of chloral hydrate in order to photograph her, sound asleep, mouth ajar. Is her lack of restraint to be correlated with that of those four women who liked to take off their clothes in public, or Marion Watson who felt impelled to dance on the altar table in church? Could these symptoms of their mania be understood, in part at least, as protests against the repressive inhibitions imposed on “respectable” women in mid-Victorian England?

Mr. Thomas Grantham the bookseller, and Mr. Stephen Hawkins the laborer, both adamantine but commanding in their bearded faces, present the kinds of paranoid ideas of conspiracy and marital jealousy that are typical of psychoses in male patients even today. Hawkins is, perhaps, a bit less direct in his gaze, more suspicious, more furtive. Had their occupations not been defined, both may have been a step up on the socioeconomic ladder from the “laborers,” “stable boys,” and “domestic servants” who formed the majority of the group and, indeed, of the largely pauper population of public asylums in general.

All of this can be related to the dominant theory of mental illness in Victorian England: that it was fundamentally hereditary, and that it flourished among the poor and supposedly degenerate social classes. At about the same time as these photographs were made the then-eminent psychiatrist Daniel Hack Tuke made this view explicit proposing that because of his “dissolute habits” or “the brain he inherited from parents indulging in like habits,” the English laborer was “more liable to insanity than other people.”⁴ This view was of course most reassuring to the rich and well-favored, whose (presumably) better heredity and adherence to more “civilized” ways of living served to distinguish them from the outcasts consigned to the asylum, the prison, or the county workhouse. It is not surprising, then, that in five of the twenty-five patients in our group “heredity” is cited as a determining cause of illness, while epilepsy, also considered a sign of degeneracy, is noted in five others. But some provocative questions remain. Precipitating factors listed include “intemperance,” “love,” “pregnancy,” “fright,” and “overwork.” But what is “Z”? In the total collection of 96 cases no fewer than 17 carry this designation. What did Mary Ann Woore, James Cox, and Caroline Nightingale have in common? Was “Z” a coded designation for something even more unmentionable than “birth of an illegitimate child”? One of the most frequent and devastating forms of mental illness in the 19th century was known as “general paralysis of the insane.” We now know that this disorder was a late manifestation of syphilitic infection of the brain, but in the 1870s it was commonly attributed to “overindulgence” or to mercury poisoning (mercury being the common treatment for syphilis at that time). Could “Z” have been a concealed reference to some such condition? James Cox was only 23, rather too young to have suffered from that sort of illness, although he could have had the acute or primary form of the disease. What mystery lies concealed behind “Z”?

I have assumed here that “C.M.” stands as an abbreviation for “chronic

mania,” as “A.M.” surely did for acute mania. Am I correct? Could “C.M.” have been “congestive mania,” a diagnosis proposed by an American psychiatrist of the period? Diagnostic classification was far from being standardized at that time, and the unknown hospital in question may have used one of its own devising. Could “C.M.” have been simply “common madness”?

Today, of course, the theory (and practice?) of physiognomic diagnosis has faded; in the world of late 20th century psychiatry, ostensibly more “objective” behavioral criteria are in vogue. The last century’s trust in the “objectivity” and “fidelity” of the photograph we now view as a quaint corollary of that era’s views about the perfectibility of man and the omnipotence of science. We know now that the photograph may lie and deceive, that it can be exploited in the service of propaganda, that it can be artfully doctored and manipulated in order to manipulate its audience. We know, too, that the viewer can and does project his inner life onto the photographic image, just as he projects on the drawn or painted one. It was thus that the Hungarian psychiatrist Szondi developed in the 1930s a projective test in which the subject was asked to choose from among a group of photographs of diagnosed psychiatric patients the ones he “liked” the best⁵. Szondi thought that this choice would demonstrate not only emotional but genetic affinities between test subject and patient. Little used now, this “test” did demonstrate the subjective, often idiosyncratic character of viewers’ responses to photographs of the mentally ill.

The Lowinsky photographs return us to another era—one of clearer convictions, simpler technologies and more optimistic expectations. They are a unique and invaluable record of the conjunction between 19th century psychiatry and the beginnings of photography—one whose promise, overtaken by the complexity of events in both fields, was left unfulfilled, but whose brief flowering has left us with fascinating and challenging testimonies such as these.

Aaron H. Esman, M.D.

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The author is indebted to Dr. Sander Gilman, whose works have been an invaluable source of historical information.



Emma Barnes.

28 yrs.

Don. Loomis

17/6/75.



CM

Z

Barnum.

Mary Ann Wood

Tries to bite him to swallow.
Wham herself to the sea.
Pulls about the furniture
Takes the woman at her own
ly. Unable to answer questions
rationally.

18 yrs.

W of
S. Warner.

8/3/76.



Melancholia

Pregnancy.

Conterbury.

Elizabeth Tappenden.
Is forsaken by God that he has
forgot her. That a large fire
came into the house one night &
went out again - It was the
devil & meant great harm to her.
Has tried to drown herself.
After the birth of her child which was
premature she became excited & was
violent & continues so at times.

40 yrs

Seamstress

21/9/15



C. M.

Uthendale

Carmichael House

Mary ^{Tilda} Dunn

Inclination to scold herself
& others. Runs & laughs about
& wants strike strangers.

At times very excitable &
troublesome at other times
work.

67 yrs.

wife of
labourer.

18/5/75.



CM

Excitement at
her son's marriage.

Barnes

Mary Ann Ames

Prepers remaining in a state of
nudity. Says she tears up her
clothes & throws them out of the window
Dips her head in the big tub.
Got in a room where a child was
asleep. Took off all its clothes
& tried to administer a dose of
ketchup.

51 yrs.

wife of
Labaner.

27/5/78.



C.M.

Chilney.

Barnum

Sarah Catt.

Says she never means to die.
When she requires medicine
takes Epsom Salts mixed with
her own urine.

Thinks her dear child is
coming home with her.

Oct. 20/90.

Domestic
Servant,

21/1/77.



Melanaholter

Born of illegitimate
child.

Woodchurch

Susannah Millier.

Distrusts her relations, refuses to eat food with
the family but eats that thrown away for the
hogs. Is cruel to her child when alone with it.
Was found in a well. Says she is so wicked
& hostile to word. repeatedly threatened to
make away with herself.

Was seduced when only 15 yrs old by her
sister's husband & has been melancholy
since the birth of the child.

Disc'd R. & Co.

40 yrs.

wife of
labourer.

17/6/75



Mr.

Intendant

Barnum.

Sarah Ann Hodge
has a devil in her ear who she
wishes extricated. has been to the
clergyman but he was unable
to relieve her. At 12 at night
she will ascend thro the ceiling to join
her mother who has been dead some years.
Says her mother appeared to her & ordered
her to stop her foolish tricks.

Edw R.

23 yrs.

Stable boy.

1/8/76.



Imbecility.

L.

Sandgate.

^{born}
James Cox.

In aprils he is taken up with
worms. Is destructive restless
excitable. twice escaped from the
workhouse.

was in Barming Heath.

Is empl'd in the Kitchen.

very loquacious.

62 yrs.

Widow of
Labourer.

13/10/76.



a.m.

Chilean,
Wendy.

Shuttenden.

Louisa Beane.

Thought the st very kind in not
coming earlier as she had 21 babies.
that do all the work herself.

Said her nurse was going to the
hospital to have her water let off

her kidneys cut out. asked for a
knife & rope to destroy herself.

uses very bad language & at the almost last week
would swear at everyone. The above was

taken after 40 yrs of Chorea.

act. 33 yrs.

Labourer.

12/4/77



Manix

Religion.

ospreige.

Stephen ~~Scott~~ ^{Scott} MacKinnon

Imagines he hears supernatural voices commanding him to do certain things, & admits he should feel obliged to commit any act thus indicated to him however repugnant to his feelings.

He administered the sacrament to his children.

Attempted suicide by drowning.

He works in the garden & behaves well.

108/35.

12/1/75.

5/4/75.



C. H.

Henderson

Bar

Thomas Henderson

On the 10th the body of a
man showing all the marks
was more enclosed.

Persons have been enticed into the
system which have been away, the
stomach & he had been mutilated.

Thomas about 20 years old.
Carried a knife constantly.
He had been in the army & was called

65 yrs.

wife of
labourer.

25/1/76



CM

Domestic.

Lower.

Ann Hill.

Constantly tearing her clothes
scrapping herself. Was
mistaken her wardwoman in life
Muttering incoherent talk
Calls herself Mr. Poulson
her attacks are recurrent

3 yrs.

Born Slave

16/3/77.



CM

Domestic
Trouble

Sandwich

Elizabeth Ann Williams.

Says she has committed murder & must suffer death. That the world is in darkness. Was very excited one night & imagined her husband shouting - "We will keep your secret no longer."

Lost her husband - Lived with the attendant.

21 yrs

21 yrs

St. Lawrence

1886/87



Mary

Epilepsy

St. Lawrence

Sarah Mary Austin.
Epilepsy, 18 yrs.
Was a decided suicidal tendency,
& admits that she twice strangled
herself - wandered about at
night & attempted to strangle
herself & her father.

65-8

54 yrs.

C. W.

widow of
labourer.

Religion

5/6/77

By the.



Marion Malcom
Says she has been ordered by the
Almighty to remove the cross from
the parish church at By the. & she
proceeded to do so. & danced on the
altar table.
Often lies in bed all day & gets up at
night & plays the concertina in
front of the neighbor's houses.

5/9/77.

Dressmaker.

at 34 years.



Mania.

quarrelsome.

Deaf.

Anna Cloud Nore Cloud

Violent behaviour to patients attempting
to strike them with a poker &c.

Throwing knives & forks when at dinner?
attempting to bite her parents & dash
them against the wall.

Was in St. Luke's 12 years ago discharged
as incurable -

Delusory acts to her age &c.

7/8/77

Domes' Servant

Oct 19 years.



A. Manix

Long
ill health.

Shoulder.

Mary Hutchings.

Mild mischievous manner. Extraordinary behavior
in a place of worship. Propensity to
wander from home even without proper
clothes. Various delusions.

Struck to commit suicide &

threaten her brother.

Last April she had erysipelas of the head.

Discharged recovered.

18 yrs

none

16/12/77.



Imbecility.

Incest
Hereditary.

Charlotte. Dean
Snaps sticks to herself & runs
about. will not answer questions
but laughs at one. Takes her clothes
off. Is violent at times will
undress herself several times a
day. The result of an incision
intended below a breast
was initial disease.

35 yrs.

C.M.

born Louvain.

Epilepsy.

27/5/75.

Burnings.



Mary Caspell.
Incoherence of expression & general
vacancies of action & demeanour.
Talks about being taken for
a walk. & other senseless things
asked the Dr. if he were going
to sing -

45 yrs.

CM

Ripper's wife.

Z.

18/5/75.

Barns.



Caroline Lightingle.

Believes her husband is married
to another woman by whom he had
a family. Also been constant
associate of abandoned women.
Throws herself head foremost into a
ditch near her home & all but
succeeds in destroying herself.

26 yrs

wife of
Labourer

21/9/75



Imbecility

Stilets

Carthage Hall

Isabella Varyer
Vacantilly manner. Wanders
about the street. Lying "kennies".
Quite neglects her only child
Thru a bad father husband.
Paroxysms of violence of that kind
intractable state of excitement or
characteristic of this form of insanity.

CONTRIBUTORS

JOEL-PETER WITKIN'S photographs are collected by the Museum of Modern Art, New York; The Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris; and the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam. In 1985 his first monograph *Joel-Peter Witkin*, was published by Twelvetreets Press. In 1989, *Gods of Earth and Heaven*, a second collection of his photographs was also published by Twelvetreets Press.

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SIMON LOWINSKY, owner of Lowinsky Gallery, New York, purchased an album of ninety-six photographs of insane people several years ago in San Francisco.

COLOPHON

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