

BY C.L. LANEY

TEMPLE GRANDIN

AUTISM AND ANIMAL
WELFARE ACTIVIST



CHAPTER 1

Who Is Temple Grandin?

Living with a disability can be a challenge. Some see it as an obstacle. Temple Grandin views her disability as a gift.

Grandin has autism. This is also called autism spectrum disorder (ASD). ASD is a **developmental disability**. It can cause social problems. A person might have trouble making eye contact. They may show little emotion. Being around others could be hard. Behavioral problems are common too.

Some people with ASD need a lot of help with daily life. Others need less. Many are able to live completely independently.

At two years old, Grandin was diagnosed with ASD. She faced many issues related to her disability growing up. Her doctor wanted to put her in an institution. But her mother refused. With help, Grandin overcame these challenges. Now she is an ASD **activist**. Her work helps people better understand ASD.

Grandin's activism extends beyond ASD. She is an animal welfare **advocate** too. That means she fights for animals to be treated well. Her autism has played a role in this. ASD made her **sensitive** to many things. Sound was one. Touch was another. This helped Grandin understand how animals felt. Farmers listened to her. New systems were created. These are gentler. They make life better for animals.

Grandin's work has shown something important. Disabilities don't have to limit a person's life. They are just differences. A disability can even help someone find purpose. ASD made Grandin see the world differently. That is what helped her change it.



Temple Grandin and her mother, Eustacia Cutler, attended the Emmy Awards together in 2010.



This photo of Grandin with livestock appears on the cover of her autobiography, *Thinking in Pictures*.

An early form of treatment for people with ASD was shock therapy. While it was done, nurses had to control a patient's movements.





CHAPTER 2

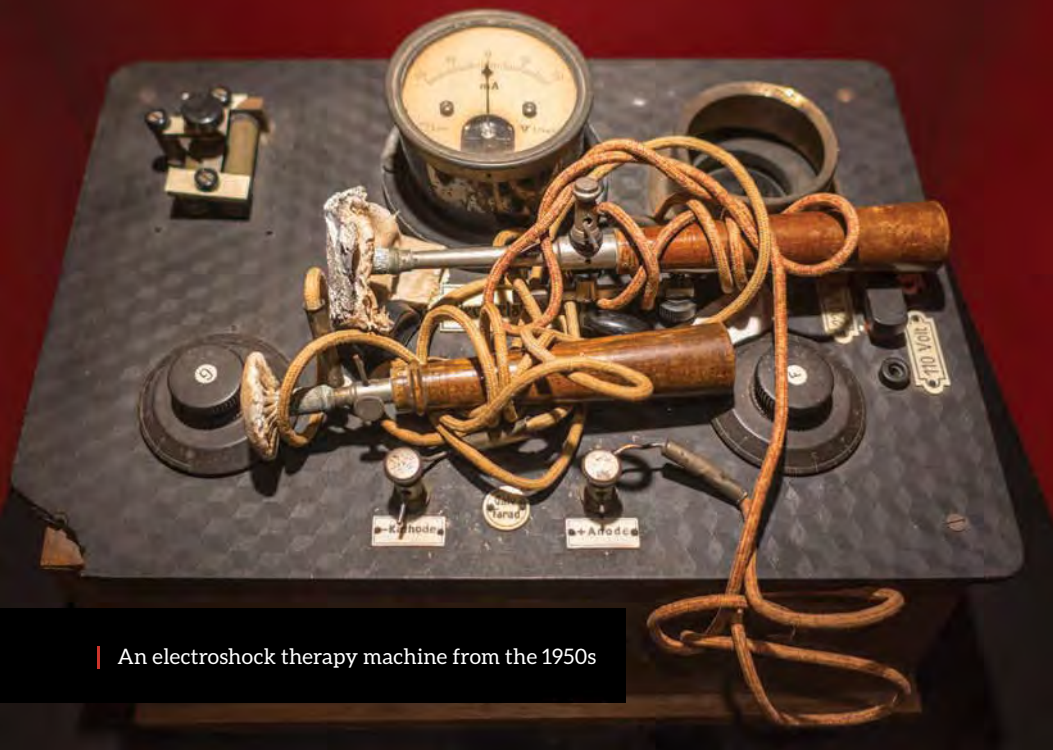
The Worlds of Autism and Animal Welfare

ASD is not a new disorder. It's common now. In the United States, 1 in 54 children has ASD. Still, autism isn't fully understood.

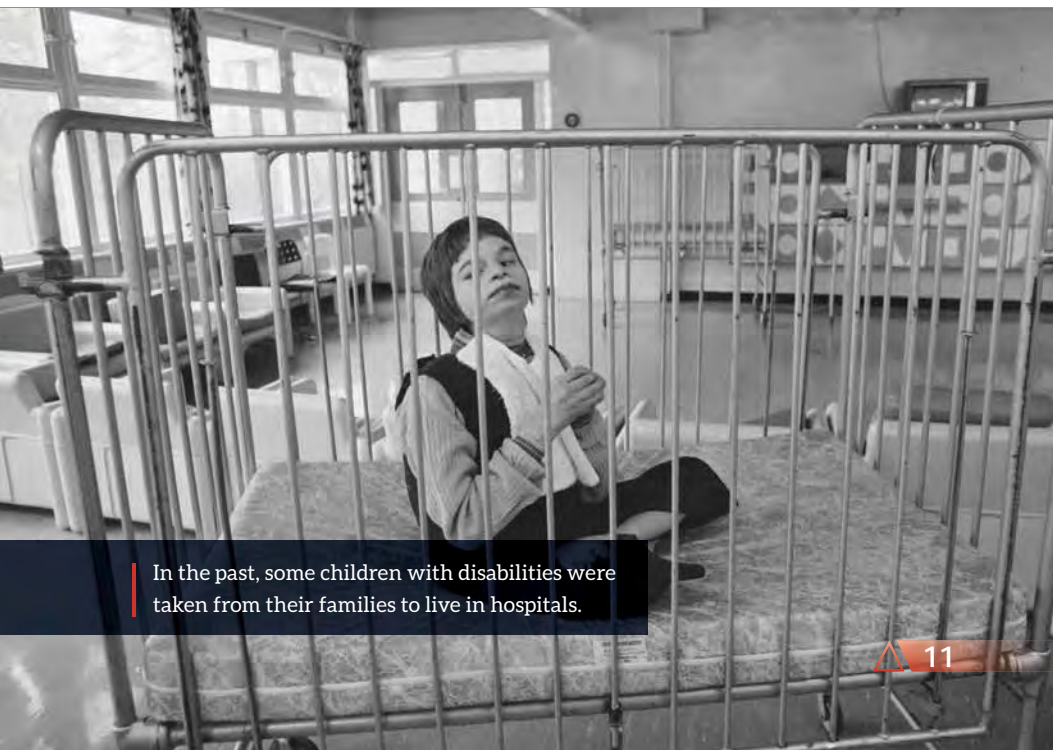
For years, people with ASD were treated poorly. Shock therapy was one treatment. This involved sending electric currents into the brain. It was painful. But it helped stop certain behaviors. Some people were against its use. They did not think it was right.

Grandin was born in the 1940s. ASD was thought to be a form of brain damage then. In 1943, it got a new label. Doctors called it a social and emotional disorder. No one knew how to treat it.

It was the 1950s. Doctors had a theory. They said mothers were to blame. A mother might not be loving enough. This lack of love was believed to cause ASD. Children started to be taken from their parents. Many were placed in facilities. But this was harmful. It often made symptoms worse. The theory was soon proven wrong.



| An electroshock therapy machine from the 1950s



| In the past, some children with disabilities were taken from their families to live in hospitals.



In the 1950s, livestock often lived in crowded conditions like at this meat packing center in Chicago, Illinois.



At the time, **livestock** were being mistreated too. Cattle raising was a big business. Millions of cows roamed U.S. farms. However, they suffered before **slaughter**. Cows were shoved through **chutes** to be moved. Surfaces were often slick. The animals would slip. This scared them. Many people found this cruel. It was also dangerous. Workers could be kicked or **trampled**.

Living with ASD helped Grandin see things others couldn't. She knew how people with ASD felt. Animals' feelings made sense to her too. With her unique insight, Grandin connected to both worlds.



| In 1948, Temple Grandin was a toddler.