

## TEMPLE GRANDIN

Few women have achieved what Temple Grandin has in one lifetime. Named by *Time Magazine* as one of the 100 most influential people in the world, she has brought enlightenment, encouragement and openness to the autistic community. As well, she has pioneered more humane treatment of cattle and is known world-wide for her animal-rights and autism advocacy.

### EARLY LIFE

Mary Temple Grandin was born in Boston, Massachusetts, in 1947. At age two, she showed signs of severe autism, including lack of speech. Although her father wanted to institutionalize her, as was common for children with what was then called brain damage, fortunately for the world Temple's mother, Eustacia Purves Cutler, sought help for her daughter and after countless hours of therapy Temple was able to talk. But her life as a child was full of challenges and pain—in school, she was teased mercilessly because of her tendency to repeat herself. Again, fortune favored those who would later benefit from her insights, this time in the form of her high-school science teacher, William Carlock, who became her mentor, and her aunt, who lived on a ranch in Arizona where Temple spent time. Labeled an autistic savant in her early adulthood, Temple was drawn to science.

### EDUCATION

She attended Franklin Pierce College, earning a bachelor's degree in 1970. Five years later she earned a master of science degree at Arizona State University, and in 1989 she was awarded a doctor of philosophy (Ph D) degree in animal science from the University of Illinois.

### CAREER

Dr. Grandin worked for the *Arizona Farmer-Rancher* as livestock editor during her student years. She is now a member of the faculty at Colorado State University, a consultant to the livestock industry, and a sought-after speaker on autism.

### ACCOMPLISHMENTS

She was one of the first scientists to write about animal behavior, in particular how cattle respond to visual distractions. Her Ph D thesis was about pigs' responses to visual stimuli. She published several papers and abstracts about handling cattle before and during the process of slaughter. Her recommendations have been adopted by many businesses. Her sensitivity to the environment around her, brought about by the autism, has made her keenly aware of what animals experience. She advocates for animals with the view that they are sentient beings, not merely property.

## HONORS, AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

In the Heroes category, she was named one of the 100 most influential people in the world by *Time Magazine* in 2010.

In 2011, she was awarded the Ashoka Fellowship.

In 2012, she was inducted into the Colorado Women's Hall of Fame, the Texas Trail Hall of Fame and the Hall of Great Westerners of the National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum.

She received a distinguished service award from the American Farm Bureau in 2015.

In 2016, she was inducted into the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

In 2017, she was inducted into the National Women's Hall of Fame.

She was the subject of a film which received Golden Globe awards and of a BBC documentary and has been featured in other documentaries.

Honorary doctorate degrees have been awarded by several universities.

The meat industry has conferred several awards.

## BOOKS:

*Emergence: Labeled Autistic*, 1986

*The Learning Style of People with Autism: An Autobiography*, 1995

*Thinking in Pictures*, 1996

*Animals in Translation*, 2005

*The Way I See It*, 2008

*Improving Animal Welfare, a Practical Approach*, 2010

## HER LEGACY

Temple Grandin is an outstanding advocate for those with disabilities, most notably autism, an example of courage and determination in the face of significant barriers, and a prominent, widely respected spokesperson for the welfare of animals. She has had lasting influence on procedures and practices in the meat industry and is world renowned for her scientific expertise.

## QUESTIONS

- What gave her the determination to persist in spite of obstacles?
- Dr. Grandin always wears jeans and a Western shirt, no matter where she is appearing. Why do you think she does this?
- Do you know, or know of, autistic people? If so, how have they been treated and cared for? Is the treatment appropriate and helpful?
- Would you like to see the film about Dr. Grandin?

- What do you think it means to think in pictures?

## GLOSSARY

Abstract—a scientific or academic paper

Autism--a developmental disorder of variable severity characterized by difficulty in social interaction and communication and by restricted or repetitive patterns of thought and behavior

Humane—kind, considerate behavior toward others

Mentor—a guide

Renowned—famous

Savant—one who is extraordinarily wise

Sentient—able to perceive or feel things

Stimuli—environmental activity

## TIMELINE

August, 1947—born in Boston, Massachusetts

1949—mother searched for speech therapist because she did not talk

1950—acquired speech

1952-1965—schooling

1970—bachelor’s degree from Franklin Pierce University

1975—master’s degree from Arizona State University

1989—doctoral degree from the University of Illinois

1990s to present—professor of animal science at Colorado State University

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Kosovski, Jason. “Temple Grandin elected to American Academy of Arts and Sciences.” Colorado State University news, April 20, 2016.

“Temple Grandin.” Wikipedia, undated.

White, Rob. “CSU’s Superstar Professor.” Fort Collins Coloradoan newspaper, December 13, 2015.

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