

Notes for *The Century of Deception*

Chapter Three: 'An Extraordinary Delivery of Rabbits', pp. 54-80.

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- 'An Extraordinary Delivery of Rabbits' title: *A Short Narrative Of an Extraordinary Delivery of Rabbits*.
- April when five weeks pregnant: *A Short Narrative Of an Extraordinary Delivery of Rabbits, Perform'd by Mr. John Howard, Surgeon at Guildford*. Published by Mr. St. André Surgeon and Anatomist to his Majesty, London, 1727, p. 23. [Hereafter known as *Short*]. It came out on 3 December 1726, *The Evening Post*, 1-3 December, 1726.
- Desire to eat them: *Short*, p. 24.
- Guts of a pig: *Short*, p. 25.
- Rabbit's head and foot: *Mary Toft's 3rd Confession*, 12 December 1726.

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- 'something in the Form of a dissected Rabbit': *The British Journal*, 22 October 1726.
- 'Persons of Distinction in Town': *Short*, p. 7.
- Two letters on 6 and 9 November: *Short*, pp. 5-6.
- Fencing expert: *The Genuine Works of William Hogarth, John Nichols, In Two Volumes*. Volume 1, London, 1808, p. 469.
- Alexander Pope's accident: *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* [hereafter known as *ODNB*], St André, Nathanael (1679/80–1776).
- Royal appointment, May 1723: *The Genuine Works*, p. 465.
- Midwifery and physicians: *From Hogarth to Rowlandson: Medicine in Art in Eighteenth-Century Britain*, Fiona Haslam, Liverpool University Press, 1996, p. 21.

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- Howard's house: *Short*, p. 8.
- 15 November: This is the date stated by St André in *Short*, p. 7. However there is a newspaper report the day before which states: 'last Friday (i.e. 11 November) Mr Andre, the King's Surgeon and Anatomist went down thither to see them', *Parker's Penny Post*, 14 November 1726. Denis Todd in *Imagining Monsters: Miscreations of the Self in Eighteenth-Century England*, The University of Chicago Press, 1995, p. 275, note 28, p. 275 speculates that St André planted the story ahead of the trip.
- Entire trunk of a rabbit without fur: *Short*, p. 8.
- 'common Dung': *Short*, p. 11.
- small fish bones: *Short*, p. 12. In her third confession Mary Toft said that Howard had found the backbone of an eel in the guts of one of her earlier productions. She conjectured they belonged to some eels she had eaten a couple of days before. *Mary Toft's 3rd Confession*, 12 December 1726.
- Followed by the head: *Short*, pp. 13-14.
- Royal Society: *The Daily Journal*, 14 November 1726.
- 'like well formed, common, natural Rabbits': *Short*, p. 16
- ' exactly like such Creatures as must inevitably undergo the Changes that happen to adult Animals'; *Short*, pp. 19-20.
- 'like the Paws of a Cat': *Short*, p. 15.
- 'Præternatural': *Short*, p. 21.

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- Newspapers: *Mist's Weekly Journal, London Journal and Weekly Journal, or, British Gazetteer*, both dated 19 November 1726 and *The Daily Journal*, 14 November, 1726 all referred to John Howard as 'an eminent Surgeon and Man-Midwife', while *The Weekly Journal, or, British Gazetteer*, 19 November 1726 noted that a woman from Godalming had produced 14 rabbits.
- 'a Veil should be drawn over it, as an Imperfection in humane Nature': *Mist's Weekly Journal*, 19 November 1726,
- 'which I thought so extraordinary for a Woman in her Condition': *Some Observations Concerning The Woman of Godlyman In Surrey*, Cyriacus Ahlers, London, 1726, p. 7. Published 13 December 1726 according to *The Daily Post*, 13 December 1726. [Hereafter known as *Some Observations*.]
- Colleague's findings: *Some Observations*, pp. 12-13.
- 'unnecessary Pain': *Short*, p. 35.
- Dryness of her deliveries: *Some Observations*, p. 19.
- Feigning a headache: *Some Observations*, p. 18.
- 'thought fit to conceal it': *Some Observations*, p. 13.
- Sir Richard Manningham: *ODNB*, Manningham, Sir Richard (bap. 1685, d. 1759).
- Manningham at Guildford: *An Exact Diary of what was observ'd during a Close Attendance upon Mary Toft*, By Sir Richard Manningham, London, 1726, p. 7. [Hereafter known as *An Exact Diary*.]
- Unconvinced by labour motions: *An Exact Diary*, p. 11.
- Hog's bladder: *An Exact Diary*, p. 14.
- 'artfully conveyed': *An Exact Diary*, p. 17.
- A cheat: *An Exact Diary*, p. 14.
- Defer fraud: *An Exact Diary*, pp. 18-19.

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- Lacy's Bagnio: *The Daily Journal*, 2 December 1726. Her accommodation was paid for by St André. We know this because the master of the Bagnio, Mr Lacy, later had to sue St André for failing to pay the costs of Toft's stay there. Mr Lacy was awarded 56 l. 14 s. 10 d. in damages, *The British Journal*, 20 May 1727.
- Bagnio used for: *Gender, Pregnancy and Power in Eighteenth-Century Literature: The Maternal Imagination*, Jenifer Buckley, Palgrave Macmillan, 2017, chapter 2.
- Letter to Douglas: *An Advertisement Occasion'd by Some Passages in Sir R. Manningham's Diary*, J. Douglas M.D., London, 1727, pp. 5-6
- James Douglas: *ODNB*, Douglas, James (*bap.* 1675, *d.* 1742).
- Bickering: *An Advertisement Occasion'd*, pp. 34-5. Douglas took issue with Manningham in suggesting that he had personally thought that some sort of production was imminent. In a rather laboured explanation he said that others might have gone along with it, that it was possible he might not have expressed dissent, but he certainly hadn't been of that opinion.
- 'rabbit woman': See for instance *The Evening Post*, 8-10 December 1726.
- 'Conversation of People of all Ranks, Ages, and Conditions': *The Anatomist Dissected: Or The Man-Midwife finely brought to Bed. Being an Examination of the Conduct of Mr. St. Andre. Touching the late pretended Rabbit-bearer; as it appears from his own Narrative*, Lemuel Gulliver, The Second Edition, London, 1727, p. 34
- 'now the Topic of every Conversation': *Much ado about Nothing: Or, a Plain Refutation Of All that has been Written or Said Concerning the Rabbit-Woman of Godalming*, London, 1727, pp. 5-6.
- 'There is one thing that employs everybody's tongue at present'; 'who had brought forth seventeen rabbits': *Lord Hervey and His Friends 1726-38*, Edited by the Earl of Ilchester, London: John Murray, 1950, p. 82.

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- 'Every Creature in town both Men & Women have been to see & feel her' and 'All the eminent physicians, Surgeons, and Men-midwives in London are there Day & Night to watch her next production.': Hervey to Henry Fox, 3 December 1726, Hervey MSS 941/47/4, pp. 29-32, Suffolk Record Offices, Bury St. Edmunds, cited in cited in Dennis Todd, 'Three Characters in Hogarth's Cunicularii and Some Implications', *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, Vol. 16, No. 1, Autumn, 1982, pp. 28-29. I have used this source, rather than *Lord Hervey and His Friends* (above note), as the capitalisation has been taken directly from the source material.
- 'divided into factions about': *The Works of Alexander Pope. New Edition including Several Hundred Unpublished Letters, and other new Materials*. John Wilson Croker and Rev. Whitwell Elwin, Volume VI, Correspondence - Vol. I, London, John Murray, 1871. Pope to Caryll, 5 December 1726, p. 294.
- 'neither believe nor disbelieve' and 'thoroughly examined on both sides': *The Private Journal and Literary Remains of John Byrom*, Edited by Richard Parkinson, Vol. I - Part I., Chetham Society, 1854. Letter from Dr Deacon to John Byrom, 6 December, 1726, p. 233
- 'far from being detected; but remains, as yet, as much in the dark as ever': *The Daily Journal*, 7 December 1726
- Breaking of bones: *Short*, p. 28.
- 'repugnant to the Structure of these Parts' and 'Romance': *An Advertisement Occasion'd*, pp. 13-14.
- Hear it himself: *An Advertisement Occasion'd*, p. 14.
- 3 December: *The Evening Post*, 1-3 December 1726.
- Second Baron Onslow: Karen Harvey, *The Imposteress Rabbit Breeder: Mary Toft and Eighteenth-Century England*, Oxford University Press, 2020, p. 18.
- Stealing fish: *Ibid*, p. 19.

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- Joshua Toft: *Ibid*, p. 11.
- Threat to land ownership. *Ibid*, p. 85: 'Mary Toft's rabbit births might have been a political response to poverty and social dislocation by the women in the town, rooted in women's preeminent knowledge of the reproductive power of the female body.'
- 'almost alarmed England': *Portraits, Memoirs, and Characters, of Remarkable Persons*, James Caulfield, In Four Volumes. Vol. II, London, 1819, p. 199.
- 'it would have done as well for me as a live one': Edward Costen in *The Several Depositions of Edward Costen, Richard Stedman, John Sweetapple, Mary Peytoe, Elizabeth Mason, and Mary Costen*; Relating to the Affair of Mary Toft, London, 1727, p. 5.
- Another two: *Ibid*, John Sweetapple, p. 11 & Mary Peytoe, p. 13.
- 'that she could not eat a Bit of a Rabbit, was she to have a Thousand Pounds for so doing': *Ibid*, Elizabeth Mason, pp. 15-16.
- Seven delivered: *Ibid*, Mary Costen, p. 18.
- 'concerned for his Wife's Misfortune': *Ibid*, Mary Costen, p. 19.

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- Porter at Lacy's Bagnio: *An Exact Diary*, p. 25.
- 'that more effectual Measures might be taken to come at the whole Truth': *An Advertisement Occasion'd*, p. 17. Relating to what happened on 3 December 1726: 'Information being given to the Right Hon. the Lords *Albermarle* and *Limerick*, by a Servant of the Bagnio, that the Woman had employ'd him to procure her a Rabbit clandestinely...Sir *Richard Manningham* wrote down the Information. It was not, however, thought convenient to divulge this Piece of News, till next Day, that more effectual Measures might be taken to come at the whole Truth.'
- Manningham and Sir Thomas Clarges: *An Exact Diary*, pp. 25-7.

- But Manningham still felt the fraud was not yet fully detected: *An Exact Diary*, p. 27.
- 'other Arguments were necessary, than Anatomy, or any other Branch of Physick': *An Exact Diary*, p. 25.
- Manningham's part in Toft's confessions: *An Exact diary*, pp. 31-3.
- Three confessions: Taken 7, 8 & 12 December 1726.
- King's pardon: *The Daily Post*, 8 December 1726.

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- 'should be ruined': *Mary Toft's 1st Confession*, 7 December 1726.
- Joshua 6th of 12 children: *The Imposteress Rabbit Breeder*, p. 22.
- Ann as informal mid-wife: *Ibid*, pp. 32-3.
- 'Ann Tofts, my husband's mother': *Mary Toft's 3rd Confession*, 12 December 1726.
- Ann 'ordered' her: *Ibid*.
- 'to pieces': *Ibid*.
- Mother-in-law by her side: *Mary Toft's 2nd Confession*, 8 December 1726: 'My M[other] was very seldome from me'.
- Howard as a confederate: In this interpretation I am going along with *Imagining Monsters*, Dennis Todd, p. 272, note 14. 'I have assumed throughout that Howard did not connive with the Tofts'.

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- 'must have put them up': *Mary Toft's 2nd Confession*, 8 December 1726: 'She is of opinion that if the Rabbits did not breed in her that her Mother in Law and Mr Howard must have put them up for nobody else came near her.' At the start of this confession she said that Mr Howard and her mother-in-law had 'talked a great while' in 'another chamber'. She also said in the same confession that 'When ever he [Howard] came they always talked tog[ether] in a the room where she showed all that come away.'
- Howard believed births genuine: *Mary Toft's 3rd Confession*, 12 December 1726. 'My feigned pains were to bring it down Now he believed it to be true.' In *Mary Toft's 1st Confession*, 7 December, 1726: 'She protests and declares that Mr How[ard] that he never knew any thing about putting up these rabbits and that she was always affrayed of his finding it out.'
- 'vile Cheat and impostor': *Mist's Weekly Journal*, 17 December 1726.
- 'The learned Gentlemen, who find themselves mistaken at last in their Judgments of that Affair, are healing their Reputations as well as they can by writing of Pamphlets': *Mist's Weekly Journal*, 17 December, 1726.
- 'most abominable Fraud': *The Daily Post*, 10 December 1726.
- A full account of the discovery: *The Daily Post*, 10 December 1726 and *The Evening Post*, 6-8 December 1726.
- 'gone distracted': *Mist's Weekly Journal*, 17 December 1726. Fiona Haslam writes in *From Hogarth to Rowlandson: Medicine in Art in Eighteenth-Century Britain*, p. 35, that this comment refers to St André, although his name isn't stated in the newspaper article
- Other doctors: *Short*, p. 21: Dr Steigerthal and Dr Tessier are mentioned as being present.
- Dr Hempe: *Short*, p. 30. His rebuttal appeared in *The Daily Post*, 13 December 1726, signed as 'J. Hampe, M.D.'. One who wasn't deceived was a Mr Dillingham: *The Public Advertiser*, 31 October 1766: 'Mr Dillingham, the Apothecary, who, on feeling her Pulse, pronounced that she was not in Labour, and laid a Wager with St Andre, of twenty Guineas, that in a limited Time the Cheat would be discovered. It was so, and Mr Dillingham laid out the Money on a Piece of Plate, on which he had three Rabbits engraved for the Arms'.

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- *The Anatomist Dissected*: Published *The Daily Courant*, 14 December 1726.
- *Gulliver's Travels*: *Gulliver's Travels* was published on 28 October 1726.
- Fallopian tubes: *The Anatomist Dissected*, p. 13, miss numbered as p. 12.
- Lungs of foetus sink: *Ibid*, p. 11.
- Mary Toft able to walk: *Ibid*, p. 12, miss-numbered as p. 13.
- Thomas Braithwaite's pamphlet: Full title is *Remarks on A Short Narrative of an Extraordinary Delivery of Rabbits*, Thomas Brathwaite, Surgeon, London, 1726. Published *The London Journal*, 17 December 1726.
- Examined Mary Toft: *Ibid*, p. 32: 'I believe it will not be amiss for Mr *St Andre* to give his Reasons in his next Book, for refusing to admit Mr *Giford*, my self, and several of the Profession, to the pretended Labour of his Patient *Mary Toft*.' He does, though, examine some of the pieces of extracted rabbits (pp. 21-2).
- 'him almost in every paragraph': *Ibid*, p. 31.
- *The Discovery*: *The Discovery: Or, The Squire turn'd Ferret*. By Alexander Pope and William Pulteney, 1726. First published 20 December 1726, 2nd edition on 24 December 1726 and 3rd on 26 January 1727, cited in Dennis Todd, 'Three Characters in Hogarth's Cunicularii and Some Implications', *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, Vol. 16, No. 1, Autumn, 1982, p. 39.

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- 'less Genuine and Credible': *Much ado about Nothing: Or, a Plain Refutation Of All that has been Written or Said Concerning the Rabbit-Woman of Godalming*, London, 1727, p. 10. Published 29 December 1726, *The Evening Post*, 27-29 December 1726.
- 'pritty Gentilman' and 'plaid swetly on the Fiddil': *Ibid*, p. 15.
- 'fine-faced long-nosed Gentilman, with a Neck lik a Crain': *Ibid*, p. 16.
- 'an ugly old Gentilman in a grate blak wig': *Ibid*, p. 14. *From Hogarth to Rowlandson: Medicine in Art in Eighteenth-Century Britain*, p. 39 confirms this is a reference to Richard Manningham.
- *The Necromancer*: *Mist's Weekly Journal*, 17 December 1726.

- ‘and raised such a Laughter as perhaps has not been heard upon any other Occasion’: *Brice’s Weekly Journal*, 16 December 1726.
- ‘large pig’: *The Genuine Works of William Hogarth; illustrated with Biographical Anecdotes*, John Nichols, and the late George Steevens, In Two Volumes, Volume II, London, 1810, p. 52. A sooterkin was also produced according to this report. The description of the show comes from three different sources; and it is possible that there was more than one theatrical production featuring a ‘Harlequin Toft’. There was also a play published called *Harlequin Turn’d Imposture; or, The Guildford Comedy*, London, 1726 which might have been a variation on this after-piece. The *Daily Journal*, 23 December 1726 advertised as ‘This Day is Publish’d The Surrey Wonder. An Anatomical Farce, as it was dissected at the Theatre-Royal, in Lincoln’s-Inn-Fields’. The engraving, *The Surrey-Wonder*, depicts the scene in the theatre. Mary Toft, played by the blacked-up face of the Harlequin, is lying back on a chair, closely attended by John Howard. Nathaniel St André is trying to capture a rabbit emerging from her skirt. A woman is taunting Samuel Molineaux by holding a rabbit in front of him, while he turns away in disgust. Entering stage right is Maubray triumphantly holding a sooterkin in a bottle. There are a total of eleven people in the scene, so you can imagine there was plenty of action and laughs.
- *The Wise men of Godliman in Consultation: Cunicularii or The Wise men of Godliman in Consultation. Catalogue of Prints and Drawings in the British Museum, Vol. II, June 1689 To 1733*, Frederic George Stephens, 1873, no. 1779, pp. 638-9. Published on 22 December 1726 (*The Post-Boy*, 22-24 December 1726: ‘Sold by T. Warner in Pater-noster Row, and the Printsellers of London and Westminster’) cited in *Hogarth’s Graphic Works*, Ronald Paulson, Yale University Press, 1965, p. 131. According to *The Genuine Works of William Hogarth*, In Two Volumes, Volume I, London, 1808, p. 37: ‘a few of our principal surgeons subscribed their guinea apiece to Hogarth, for an engraving from a ludicrous sketch he had made on that very popular subject.’
- Rabbit burrow: Cunicularii also brings together ‘coney’ or ‘cony’, a colloquial term for a rabbit, with ‘cunny’, a slang term for vulva. One Latin translation, though, is ‘burrows like a rabbit’.
- Richard Manningham: Dennis Todd, in his article ‘Three Characters in Hogarth’s Cunicularii and Some Implications’, pp. 38-40 argues this character is an amalgam of Manningham and Samuel Molyneux.
- Toad: A toad had connotations of an imperfect creature. ‘News About Bosch’s “Juggler”’, Steffen Taut, Dresden. Paper given at the 8th European Magic History Conference, Vienna, 24 August 2019, p. 38.

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- Sister: Identified as Margaret Toft, in ‘Three Characters in Hogarth’s Cunicularii and Some Implications’, pp. 30-33.
- ‘Man-Midwife’: The gender neutral ‘obstetrician’ didn’t come into usage until the nineteenth century. The word ‘*Accoucheurs*’ comes up in *An Advertisement Occasion’d*, p. 10.
- History-taking: *From Hogarth to Rowlandson: Medicine in Art in Eighteenth-Century Britain*, p. 50.

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- ‘her Conscience’ and ‘touching her in the Tenderest part’: *Much ado about Nothing*, p. 7.
- ‘in her own words’: the actual phrase used in the title of *Much ado about Nothing* is ‘from her Own Mouth’.
- fumbling hands: *Ibid*, p. 14.
- Telescope: *Ibid*, pp. 14-15.
- Chimney-sweep boy: *Ibid*, p. 20.
- Monopolising the news: *The Weekly Journal or British Gazetteer*, 17 December 1726: ‘The Physicians and Surgeons have monopoliz’d the Imposture of the Rabbit Woman for their own Speculations and Defence;’
- Many visitors: *The Daily Journal*, 20 December 1726: ‘the infinite Crowds of People that resort to see her’.
- Mezzotint print: *Mist’s Weekly Journal*, 21 January 1727: ‘The pretended Rabbit Breeder, in order to perpetuate her Fame, has had her Picture done in a curious Metzetinto Print by an able Hand.’
- Holding a rabbit: For a full analysis of this engraving, see *The Imposteress Rabbit Breeder*, pp. 96-100.
- Tried at the assizes: *The British Journal*, *The London Journal*, and *Mist’s Weekly Journal*, 14 January 1727.
- Dangerously ill: *Parker’s Penny Post*, 25 January 1727: ‘Mary Tofts the pretended Rabit Breeder, is now dangerously ill in Bridewell.’ This seems to be a standard occurrence for people in prison. Elizabeth Canning, Mary Squires (chapter 6) and Richard Parsons (chapter 7) were all reported to be ill while in prison.
- ‘a Difficulty in the Case’: *The Daily Post*, 27 March 1727
- ‘What Statute she and her Confederates shall be try’d upon’: *The Daily Post*, 27 March 1727. The reasons for the failure to prosecute Mary Toft are elaborated on in *The Imposteress Rabbit Breeder*, p. 102.

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- ‘Order of his Majesty’: *The Daily Journal*, 2 December, 1726: ‘On Tuesday Night, the Woman who hath been delivered of so many Rabbits at Godalmin, was, by Order of his Majesty, brought to Town, and lodg’d in the Bagnio in Leicester-Fields.’

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- Released without charge: *The Evening Post*, 11-13 April, 1727: ‘Mary Toft, the Godalming Rabbit Woman, was last Saturday [April 8th] discharg’d from her Recognizance at the Quarter Sessions, Westminster, there being no Prosecution.’
- Howard discharged: *The Evening Post*, 16-18 May 1727: ‘Monday being the last Day of Term, Mr. John Howard of Guildford, Surgeon, mov’d by his Counsel to be discharg’d from his Recognizance, and (having given the usual Notice) he was accordingly discharg’d without any Prosecution.’
- ‘Hand in the Imposture, but did really believe the Truth of the Production of the Rabbits’: *The Daily Journal*, 19 December 1726.
- £800: *The British Journal* and *The London Journal*, 14 January 1727.

- Howard's death: *The London Evening Post*, 6-8 March 1755. It was reported that he was attacked in his bed by a villain a few months before and never fully recovered.
- Never returned to Court: *The Genuine Works of William Hogarth*, In Two Volumes, Volume I, London, 1808, p. 467.
- Consumption fell by two thirds: *The Anatomist Dissected*, p. 33: 'Warreners and Poulterers, (who complain that the Consumption of Rabbits, within this Metropolis, is become, by two thirds, less than it was formerly);'. *Mist's Week Journal*, 24 December 1726: 'Several Higglers from Cambridgeshire, Suffolk, and other Parts, affirm, they have lost above a hundred Pounds a Man by the detestable Rabbet-breeding Woman; they being under Contracts to take of the Warreners, weekly, a certain Number, which afterwards came to bad Markets, and they could not dispose of them, so that rather than she should escape Punishment, they declare they would sue her for Damage.' A higgler is a pedlar, somebody selling small items.
- 'they were not at his own table': *The Genuine Works of William Hogarth*, p. 467.
- Market woman anecdote: *Ibid*, p. 467.
- Poisoned her husband: Death of Molineux: *The Daily Post*, 15 April 1728. Accusation of poison was made in *A Letter From the Reverend Mr. M--D--N to the Hon. Lady M--n--x, on Occasion of the Death of the Rt. Hon.S---l M---n---x, Esq; who was attended by M. St. A--D--E, a Fr--ch S--g--n*. Dublin, 1730.
- 'the famous surgeon' and 'This famous Surgeon shewed his extraordinary skill at the labours of the Godamin Rabbit-breeder': *The Grub-Street Journal*, 28 May 1730.
- 96: *ODNB*, St André, Nathanael (1679/80–1776). Occasionally 'Nathanael' is spelt 'Nathaniel'.
- In early 1728 she had another daughter: Surrey History Centre: Parish Registers for Godalming (St Peter and St Paul), cited in *The Imposteress Rabbit Breeder*, note 1, p. 198. Elizabeth was baptised on 4 February, 1728.

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- April 1740: *The London Daily Post and General Advertiser*, 17 April 1740.
- Died in January 1763: *The London Evening Post*, 20-22 January 1763.
- 18 years: Joshua Toft was buried on 12 June 1745, according to the Parish Register for St Peter & St Paul in Godalming.
- 'Imposteress Rabbett Breeder': Cited in *The Imposteress Rabbit Breeder*, p. 150. Anglican Parish registers, Godalming, St Peter and St Paul.
- New full-length book on the subject: *The Imposteress Rabbit Breeder*. I am very grateful to Karen Harvey, the author, both for her insightful research that has influenced some of this chapter. But also for her personal encouragement in writing my own take on this fascinating hoax.
- 'monstrous': *Parker's Penny Post*, 28 November 1726. The heading, under which part of John Howard's letter is shown, states that it relates to 'the monstrous Births near Guildford'. The letter, without the reference to monstrous Births, is also reproduced in *The Daily Journal*, 26 November 1726.
- Several 'monstrous' births: *The British Journal* and *The London Journal*, 14 January 1727.
- 'four Children and a Monster': *The British Journal*, 1 October 1726.
- 'monstrous delivery of a Child': *Parker's Penny Post*, 12 December, 1726.

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- Births as prodigies: 'Unnatural Conceptions: The Study of Monsters in Sixteenth-and Seventeenth-Century France and England', Katharine Park and Lorraine J Daston, *Past & Present*, No. 92, August, 1981, pp. 23-4.
- Portent of God's wrath: 'and menstruous women shall bring forth monsters' from *King James Bible*, 2 Esdras, Chapter 5, Verse 8.
- *Novum Organum*: full title is *Novum Organum, sive Indicia Vera de Interpretatione Naturae* ('New organon, or true directions concerning the interpretation of nature').
- 'A compilation' and 'must be made of all monsters and prodigious births of nature'; 'with a rigorous selection': *The Works of Francis Bacon, A New Edition*, Basil Montagu, in Three Volumes, Vol. III, Philadelphia: Carey and Hart, 1844, p. 392: 'For a compilation, or particular natural history, must be made of all monsters and prodigious births of nature: of everything, in short, which is new, rare, and unusual in nature. This should be done with a rigorous selection, so as to be worthy of credit.'
- Listing names of witnesses: 'Unnatural Conceptions', pp. 47-8.
- 'their own Touch and Sight'; 'Fundamental Law' and 'to handle the subject': *The History of the Royal-Society of London*, Tho. Sprat, London, 1667, p. 83.
- St André asked Sir Hans Sloane asked to visit: Letter to Sir H Sloane, British Library: Sloane MS 4060 f. 233 (1726) cited in *An Imposteress Rabbit Breeder*, p. 58: 'I have brought the Woman from Guilford to ye Bagnio in Leicester Fields, where you may if you Please have the opportunity of seeing her deliver'd Wednesday morning.'
- Sir Richard Manningham: He was elected 10 March 1719, *ODNB*, Manningham, Sir Richard (bap. 1685, d. 1759).
- James Douglas: He was elected 4 December 1706, *ODNB*, Douglas, James (bap. 1675, d. 1742).
- St André paper published: 'In a paper on a herniated bowel he published in *Philosophical Transactions* in 1717 he showed himself to be a knowledgeable medical thinker', *ODNB*, St André, Nathanael (1679/80–1776).
- 'a very distinguished Member of the Royal Society': *A Review of the Works of the Royal Society of London*, Sir John Hill, The Second Edition, London, 1780, p. 5. The attribution is part of an anecdote showing how kind the Duke of Montagu was to animals.
- One theory: By the start of the eighteenth century the theory of reproduction through the egg, nurtured and nourished in the female womb, was fully accepted. The question was whether the monster was already there in the egg, put there by God, or if it was some more natural accident. For instance conjoined twins would therefore be the result of two eggs squashing together. Accidents meant Doctors could do something about it and also justified more research. See *Signs*

and Portents: *Monstrous Births from the Middle Ages to the Enlightenment*, Dudley Wilson, London: Routledge, 1993, pp. 147 & 157.

- Book on skin diseases: *De Morbis Cutaneis, A Treatise of Diseases Incident to the Skin*, Daniel Turner, London, 1714. The relevant chapter is 12: 'Of Spots and Marks of a Diverse Resemblance, Imprest upon the Skin of the Foetus, by the Force of the Mother's Fancy.'
- *The Female Physician*: Full title is *The Female Physician, Containing all the Diseases incident to that Sex, in Virgins, Wives, and Widows*; John Maubray, M.D., London, 1724.

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- Turner and the Royal Society; 'Turner began to assist in private human dissections: the reports of four dissections were published in the Royal Society's *Philosophical Transactions* (1693–4).' 'However, his precise reasons for displaying this motto of London's Royal Society, of which he was not a member, and a coat of arms which was not his by right of descent, remain unknown.' *ODNB*, Turner, Daniel (1667–1741).
- Maubray and Sir Hans Sloane: 'About 1724 or 1725 he set himself up in London as a teacher of midwifery. An unlicensed practitioner, he sought the patronage of Sir Hans Sloane, and such an eminent contact may have persuaded the Royal College of Physicians to ignore his lack of a licence.' *ODNB*, Maubray, John (d. 1732).
- Maubray attended Mary Toft: *An Exact diary*, p. 24, cited as 'Dr. Mowbray'.
- Unusual birthmark: *The Female Physician*, pp. 62-3.
- Startled by a cat: *De Morbis Cutaneis*, p. 114. A cat is also mentioned in *The Female Physician*, p. 368.
- Beggar's stump arm: *De Morbis Cutaneis*, p. 116. Another example is given in 'Imagination, pregnant women, and monsters, in eighteenth-century England and France', Paul-Gabriel Boucé in *Sexual underworlds of the Enlightenment*, edited by GS Rousseau and Roy Porter, Manchester University Press, 1987, p. 89: a child born with acute rickets, supposedly the result of the mother having watched a criminal broken on the wheel.
- 'monstrous child with two heads' and 'a child in the form of a lobster': *A Short History of Human Prodigious & Monstrous Births of Dwarfs, Sleepers, Giants, Strongmen, Hermaphrodites, Numerous Births, and Extreme Old Age &c.*, James Paris, Brit Mus. ADD MS 5246, nd, pp. 4-6 and 13-14. No images are permitted to be taken of this manuscript in the British Library, so any errors are due to my poor transcription.
- 'a longing for Rabbits': *Short*, p. 23.
- 'the story of my longings for the Rabbits': *Mary Toft's 2nd Confession*, 8 December 1726. Quote is: 'Mr H[owar]d aske me ab[ou]t the story of my longing for the Rabbits'.
- 'the Imagination has a most prevailing power in Conception': *The Wonder of Wonders: Or, A True and Perfect Narrative of a Woman near Guildford in Surrey, who was Delivered lately of Seventeen Rabbits, and, Three Legs of a Tabby Cat, &c.*, Ipswich, 1726, p. 7.
- 'that if the Force of Imagination in the Female Sex should be able to bring about such strange Effects': *Mist's Weekly Journal*, 7 January 1727.
- Preserving the rabbits: *The Daily Journal*, 14 November 1726. 'Mr. Howard keeps them all in Spirits; and we hear, he intends to present them to the Royal Society.'

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- Providing the proof: Finding scientific proof of monstrosities was not easy. *Signs and Portents*, pp. 161-2 tells of Charles Ellis in 1703 being asked for 300 guilders to examine some conjoined twins. He turned the opportunity down as too expensive.
- 'as to move the Bed-Clothes': *Short*, p. 27: 'Mr. Howard further related, that when she was delivered of one Rabbet, another was immediately felt in her Belly, struggling with such Violence, that the Motion thereof could be sensibly felt and seen: That this Motion has sometimes been so strong, as to move the Bed-Clothes, and that it has lasted for twenty and above thirty Hours together.'
- 23 hours: *Short*, p. 6.
- Snapping bones: *Short*, p. 28: 'the Bones of the Animal were sensibly heard to snap, and break by the violent convulsive Motions of the Uterus.'
- 'sudden Jerks and Risings': *An Exact Diary*, p. 11: 'the Motion began, which they called the leaping up of the Rabbet; it was indeed a Motion like a sudden leaping of something within the right side of her Belly, where I had before felt that particular Hardness. The Motions were various, sometimes with very strong Throws cross the Belly, especially on the right side, at other times with sudden Jerks and Risings, and tremendous Motions and Pantings, like the strong Pulsations of the Heart; and as I sat on the Bed in Company with five or six Women, it would sometimes shake us all very strongly.'
- Whining noises: *An Exact Diary*, p. 22: 'Friday the 2d instant, she had the Motion the greatest part of the Day, towards Evening it increased extreamly, insomuch that she fell into violent Convulsions, which I never before observ'd in her, with frequent Contractions of her Fingers, rolling of her Eyes, and great Risings in her Stomach and Belly: During the Fit she would often make a whining Noise.'
- 'from the first time that I had examined her': *Short*, p. 9: 'No Person but my self touch'd her, from the first time that I had examined her, to the time of her being deliver'd by me: Her Pains were pretty smart, and lasted for some Minutes.'
- 'I constantly stood before her, nor did any Person whatsoever touch her': *Short*, p. 13: André also wrote: 'From that Time I did not stir from before her, nor did I withdraw my Hand, but to deliver the Skin to a stander by.'
- Her mother-in-law carried out the insertions: *An Exact Diary*, p. 35. 'From that time *Mary Toft* did often, by the Assistance of that Woman, convey Parts of Rabbits into her Body, till at last she could do it by her self, as she had an Opportunity, and that she did continue so to do.' This is a summary of the first confession reproduced by Richard Manningham.

- Placing pieces: *Mary Toft's 1st Confession*, 7 December 1726. 'I used alwayes my selfe to put up but one piece at a time and whenever that was brought away when I had time again and thought no body would see then I slipped up another.'

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- Bits of rabbit in her pocket: *Ibid*: 'I used to keep the pieces of Rabbits that the woman brought me in my pockets being for the most p[ar]t drest when any thing was to be brought away.'
- A handkerchief or hog's bladder: *Ibid*: 'Some she brought in a pocket handk[erchief] and some in a hogs bladder which I commonly burnt but sometimes being in a great hurry and affrayed of being catcht I dont know but I might have put up some of the Bladders at some time or other.'
- Broken up: *Ibid*: 'She cut it with her Scissors and screwed the bones round having cut it in two pieces only. Then she first put up one part and upon examining again found it would hold the other part also.'
- Inserting feet: *Ibid*: 'She brought me the second that very day broke into several pieces and desired me to put up one foot at a time and then it would never be mistrusted.'
- Fur: *Ibid*: 'She advised me alwayes to put up all the skins which as far as I remember I alwayes did.'
- 'very coarse brown Paper was tearing from within her': *Short*, p. 29.
- 'We found her in exquisite Torture': *Short*, p. 30.
- 'while her Pains were upon her': *An Exact Diary*, p. 25.
- uterus expanded: *An Exact Diary*, p. 35.
- fast asleep: *An Exact Diary*, p. 36.
- 'very exactly counterfeited', *An Exact Diary*, p. 36.
- 'five or six Women': *An Exact Diary*, p. 11.
- 'she fell into violent Labour-Pains': *Short*, p. 12.
- The opposite of this is true: One only has to read the books by James Randi and Martin Gardner to appreciate this. It is the reason why magicians are very good at detecting fraud in mediums; and scientists are traditionally bad at it. On the subject of magicians, it has been suggested that Mary Toft's production of rabbits inspired the magician's well-known trick of producing a rabbit from a hat. See, for instance, 'if you could whisk rabbits out of a hat, why not out of a womb?' *Hogarth: A Life and a World*, Jenny Uglow, London: Faber and Faber, p. 120. However Eddie Dawes in two articles in *The Magic Circular*, series 132 & 133 of *A Rich Cabinet of Curiosities*, 'Mary Toft, The Rabbit Breeder of Godalming, and the Origin of the Rabbit in the Hat Trick: A Critical Assessment, Parts One & Two', vol. 81, 1987, pp. 60-62 and 85-88, proved conclusively there was no connection. This is because the first rabbit out of the hat trick didn't take place until the mid-nineteenth century; and they didn't have the right sort of hat (the Victorian top hat) to produce rabbits in Georgian times.

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- 'into a Deep Sleep, and cannot be awaked till Five Days and Nights are expired': *The Daily Courant*, 9 August 1711. Title of book is *A Full Account of the Life and Visions of Nicholas Hart: Who has every Year of his Life past, on the 5th of August, fall'n into a Deep Sleep, and cannot be awaked till Five Days and Nights are expired, and then gives a surprising Relation of what he hath seen in the Other World*, By William Hill, London, 1711. See also an article in *The Spectator*, 1 October, 1711 on Nicholas Hart. He was born on 5 August 1689 [p. 3].
- 'declared that he was no Cheat'. *A Short History of Human Prodigious & Monstrous Births*, p. 22.
- Duping scientists: They didn't always get it wrong. The Iris of the eye in Latin and Hebrew was condemned as a cheat in *Philosophical Transactions*, No. 286, July-August 1703, Vol. 23, p. 1418, cited in *Signs and Portents*, p. 142. See the report in *The English Post*, 23-25 December 1700: 'There is a Child shown near Somerset house in the Strand, about four Years old, which is reported by those who have seen it, to have these words in Latin upon the Apple of one Eye, *Deus meus*, My God; and on the other, some Characters in Greek and Hebrew, that are not visible but by Candle-light. Which causes many Speculations among the Beholders.'
- Hog's bladder with parts of rabbit: *Mary Toft's 1st Confession*, 7 December 1726. She had been given bits of rabbit wrapped inside a pig's pouch and had mistakenly inserted a portion of the latter.
- Wouldn't accept evidence of fraud: *An Exact Diary*, p. 16: St André admitted that he would have thought it was all a fraud had he not earlier 'actually deliver'd the Woman of part of a Rabbet from the very Uterus itself'.
- A week in total: *An Exact Diary*, p. 19: 'Tuesday the 29th, we brought *Mary Toft* to London with us, and lodg'd her at Mr *Lacy's* Bagnio in *Leicester Fields*'; p. 25: "In the Evening [of Sunday 4 December], *Thomas Howard*, Porter to Mr *Lacy's* Bagnio, made an Information against *Mary Toft*".
- 'she was differently form'd from other Women' and 'imposing upon the World': *An Exact Diary*, pp. 31-2.
- 'get so good a living that I should never want as long as I lived': *Mary Toft's 1st Confession*, 7 December 1726. 'When she [her mother-in-law] had seen all she said I need not be affrayed for she could tell me what I could do to get so good a living that I should never want as long as I lived I asked what that was and she told me that she would get a rabbit. I asked what I was to doe with it. and she told me that I should put it up into my body. I told her that such a thing could not be done. She sayd it could and desired to try.' In *Mary Toft's 3rd Confession*, 12 December, 1726, she said: 'She told me that if I would do it and goe thro' I should get a good living and be ruled by her and not tell of her.'
- 'expect part of the Gain' and 'continually'. *An Exact Diary*, p. 34: 'by the Advice of a Woman Accomplice whom she has not yet nam'd, and who told her she had now no Occasion to work for her Living as formerly, for she would put her into a Way of getting a very good Livelihood, and promised continually to supply her with Rabbits, and should therefore expect part of the Gain, or to that effect.'

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- ‘feigned a great Compassion for the Woman’s Case’; ‘pains’, ‘did not deserve them’. *Some Observations*, p. 13: ‘I feigned a great Compassion for the Woman’s Case, which gave Mr. *Howard* an Opportunity to represent to me, that I could not but observe, what pains he must have been at, and still took, and what the poor woman had suffered; and that he hoped His Majesty would be so gracious, when all was over, as to give them a Pension, there being many that had Pensions, who did not deserve them. I promised him, that I would not fail in my Report to His Majesty.’ Also in *Mary Toft’s 1st Confession*, 7 December 1726: ‘Mr Alh[ers] promised to get me a pension.’
- Those receiving pensions : *Britain in the Hanoverian Age, 1714-1837: An Encyclopaedia*, Gerald Newman et al, New York: Garland, 1997, p. 540.
- Guinea: *Short*, p. 34: ‘That at the same time he [Ahlers] gave the Woman a Guinea, expressing great Satisfaction, and promising that he would procure her a pension from his Majesty.’ *Some Observations*, p. 21: ‘I then told Mr. *Howard* of my Intention to return to *London*, and gave the Woman something.’
- Earning one penny: *Mary Toft’s 1st Confession*, 7 December 1726. ‘I had lost a penny for they workt [sic] for me’. Average pay was more like 6 pennies a day, so it is possible that Mary Toft was understating her own pay, *The Imposteress Rabbit Breeder*, p. 27.
- ‘people seem fond of sights and monsters’: *The Citizens of the World; Or, Letters From A Chinese Philosopher, Residing in London*, Volume the First, Dublin, 1762, Letter XLIV, p. 195. Richard D Altick in *The Shows of London*, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1978, p. 42 wrote: ‘The gallery of malformed human beings who were shown for money might have been painted by Hieronymus Bosch inspired by photographs of the Thalidomide babies born in the 1960s.’

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- Venues in London: *Shows of London*, p. 35.
- Price of one shilling: *The Daily Post*, 15 March 1725.
- Elizabeth French: *A Short History of Human Prodigious & Monstrous Births*, pp. 54-5.
- ‘cover’d all over his Body with Bristles like a Hedge Hog’: *The London Daily Post and General Advertiser*, 7 January 1735. Also see three undated advertisements in British Library, N.Tab.2026/25
- Dwarfs: Undated advertisement in British Library, N.Tab.2026/25: ‘For the Satisfaction of all curious enquirers into the Secrets of Nature is to be seen a Woman Dwarf, but Three Foot and one Inch high, born in *Sommersetshire*, and in the Fortieth Year of her Age.’
- Giants: *The Daily Post*, 20 November 1736. ‘To be seen any Hour from Ten in the Morning till Ten at Night, At the *Rummer in Bolt-Court, Fleet-street*, The wonderful Tall Essex Woman...She is near Seven Foot high, and proportional to her Height, tho’ not Eighteen Years of Age.’
- Conjoined twins: 1736 advertisement in British Library, N.Tab.2026/25: ‘This is to Acquaint the Curious, *That there is brought to this Place, and is to be shewn at the Rummer in Three Kings Court, Fleet-Street*, One of the greatest Curiosities in Nature, of a Boy and Girl, With two distinct Heads and Necks, and but one Body, three Arms, and three Legs, and Feet, and 1 Foot with six Toes...and is shewn by the Mother who was deliver’d of them, *June the 25th, 1736*. in the County of *Suffolk*.’
- Hermaphrodites : Undated advertisement in British Library, N.Tab.2026/25: ‘*That there is now to be seen at the King’s-Head, over against the Mews-Gate, at Charing-Cross; the greatest Wonder in the World, Being An Hermaphrodite, Eighteen Years of Age, compleat Male and Female, perfect in both Parts...Price One Shilling.*’
- Missing limb: *The Daily Advertiser*, 13 November 1742: ‘To be Seen...near *Charing Cross*...A Wonderful young Man, twenty-two Years of Age, who never had the Use of Hands, Arms, Legs, or Feet...’
- Extra appendages: *Social Life In The Reign Of Queen Anne*, John Ashton, London: Chatto & Windus, 1904, p. 191: ‘during the time of *Bartholomew Fair*, is to be seen the Admirable Work of Nature, a Woman having three Breasts...there is likewise to be seen the Daughter of the same Woman, which hath breasts of the like Nature.’
- Two shillings and six pence: The Angolan Hermaphrodite was charging this amount: however it was a particularly sexually-charged exhibit. Another hermaphrodite was charging one shilling.
- Mermaid: *Literary Anecdotes of the Eighteenth Century*, John Nichols, Volume V, London, 1812, p. 487
- Neck with fish-scales: *Memoirs of Bartholomew Fair*, Henry Morley, London, 1859, p. 324.
- ‘with Bristles like a Hedge Hog’: Undated advertisement in British Library, N.Tab.2026/25 and also in *The London Daily Post and General Advertiser*, 7 January 1735.
- ‘*Sir Hans Sloane*, and several other Physicians’: 1736 advertisement in British Library, N.Tab.2026/25.

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- ‘wait on any Gentleman or Ladies, if desired, at their own Houses’: *The Daily Post*, 15 March 1725.
- ‘view’d and greatly admired’: Undated advertisement in British Library, N.Tab.2026/25.
- ‘the Rabit Woman’ and ‘to sup with us’: *A Duke and his Friends*, Earl of March, Vol. I, London: Hutchinson & Co., 1911, Colonel Pelham to Duke of Richmond in letter dated 14 September 1736, p. 313.
- Twelve hours: A Woman with A Horn ‘Is to be seen every Day from Ten in the Morning, till Eight at Night, without loss of Time’, *The Daily Post*, 26 February 1725. While the Hedge-Hog Boy was available ‘To be seen from Nine In the Morning, till Nine at Night’, *The London Daily Post and General Advertiser*, 7 January 1735.
- ‘a little Violently she suffers Pain’: *A Short History of Human Prodigious & Monstrous Births*, p. 55.
- Hermaphrodites: The drawing in *A Short History of Human Prodigious & Monstrous Births*, p. 34, is of a hermaphrodite ‘equipped with a flap to demonstrate its anatomical details, and it has been suggested that this was probably the way in which hermaphrodites were exhibited to the public at the time’: *Signs and Portents*, p. 92. An Angolan hermaphrodite advert has the first half in English, the second, with more anatomical detail, in Latin, from an

undated advertisement in British Library, N.Tab.2026/25. Latin is 'well known in the post-Renaissance period as the language of pornography': *Signs and Portents*, p. 134.

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- 'the detestable Rabbet-breeding Woman': *Mist's Week Journal*, 24 December 1726.
- *The Strength of Imagination in Pregnant Women*: Full title is *The Strength of Imagination in Pregnant Women Examined: And the Opinion that Marks and Deformities in Children arise from thence, Demonstrated to be a Vulgar Error*. By a Member of the College of Physicians, London, 1727. Although written anonymously it was by James Blondel.
- 'the Occasion of the Cheat of Godalming': *The Power of the Mother's Imagination Over the Foetus Examined. In Answer to Dr. Daniel Turner's Book*, James Augustus Blondel, London, 1729, p. i
- Remain calm: *The Force of the Mother's Imagination upon her Foetus in Utero, Still further considered: In the way of a Reply to Dr Blondel's Last Book, Entitled, The Power of the Mother's Imagination over the Foetus Examined*, Daniel Turner, London, 1730, p. 137: 'endeavour to quiet their Minds, and neither long nor be afraid'.
- 'with Christian Pity and Compassion': *The Power of the Mother's Imagination*, p. 58.
- 'his Mother had received no Frigh': *The Philosophical Transactions (From the Year 1719, to the Year 1733)* Abridged, John Eames and John Martyn, Vol. VII, London, 1734, p. 484.
- while she was pregnant: *Memoirs of the Life and Writings of William Whiston, M.A. Part III. and Last*, The Second Edition, London, 1753, pp. 116-117: William Whiston, in a religious tract written in 1750, went so far as to claim that Mary Toft had given birth to rabbits after all, using it to confirm his prophecy that 'menstruous women should bring forth monsters'. He argued that Mary Toft had only made her confession under threat of torture and the physicians involved had changed their minds when they knew their reputations would suffer if they persisted with their true belief in preternatural productions. See also 'Mary Toft, Religion and National Memory in Eighteenth-Century England', Jane Shaw, *Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies*, Vol. 32, No. 3, 2009.
- 'exact Resemblance of the Foetus to a hooded Monkey': *An Account of a monstrous Foetus, ressembling a hooded Monkey: Communicated by Mr. William Gregory of Rochester*, 30 April, 1733 published in *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society of London*, Vol. 41, issue 461, p. 767. See also 'The Medical Understanding of Monstrous Births at the Royal Society of London During the First Half of the Eighteenth Century', Palmira Fontes da Costa, *History and Philosophy of the Life Sciences*, vol. 26, no. 2, 2004, pp. 157-175.
- End of the eighteenth: 'Cheat and Impostor: Debate Following the Case of the Rabbit Breeder', Glenda Leslie, *The Eighteenth Century*, Vol. 27, No. 3, Fall 1986, pp. 269-286 shows the theory sustaining through the 18th century. *Dr Blondel confuted: or, the Ladies vindicated*, Dr John Mauclerc, 1747 was one such book espousing maternal imagination.

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- 'very stupid': *Short*, p. 23.