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Of Dolls And Murder

Written by: [Michael Den Boer](#) on April 2nd, 2012



Theatrical Release Date: USA, 2012

Director: Susan Marks

Writer: Susan Marks

Narrated by: John Waters

DVD released: April 24th, 2012

Approximate running time: 70 Minutes

Aspect Ratio: 1.78:1 Anamorphic Widescreen

Rating: NR

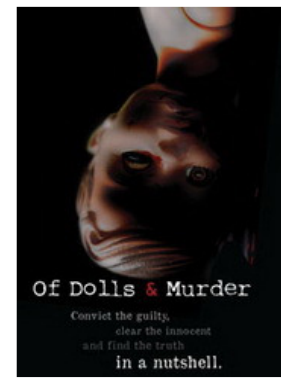
Sound: Dolby Digital Stereo English

Subtitles: N/A

DVD Release: [Seminal Films](#)

Region Coding: Region 1 NTSC

Retail Price: \$14.95



A documentary is only as good as the subject it is exploring and while some of what makes any given documentary work can be directly linked to the technical aspects of making of documentary. Ultimately it is the latter era that carries the most weight.

So what is *Of Dolls And Murder*, all about? It is documentary about a millionaire heiress named Frances Glessner Lee, who created miniature crime scenes to help detective with their investigative skills. Besides the aforementioned miniature crime scenes (known as Nutshells). She was instrumental in having coroners replaced by medical professionals. And in 1943 New Hampshire State Police made her an honorary captain, making her the first woman in U.S. history to hold that rank.

Content wise, this documentary does a superb job setting up who she was and how important her contributions were to criminal science investigating. Also eighteen of the Nutshells that she crafted are featured in this film. Reportedly there were nineteen Nutshells, unfortunately one of them has been lost. Though technology has come a long way since the 1940's, it is hard not to be impressed by the amount of detail that was put into each one of the Nutshells. In fact the Nutshells are still actively used to help detectives sharpen their investigative skills.

When it comes to the act of murder the answers are not always cut and dry. With the process of trying to piece together the who's and why's, taking center stage. And in this regard *Of Dolls And Murder* does a amazing job showing how important role forensic science plays in solving a crime.

The DVD:

Of Dolls & Murders is given a clean transfer that is presented in a anamorphic widescreen.

This release comes with one audio option, a Dolby Digital stereo mix in English. The audio is clean, clear and balanced throughout.

Extras for this release include two segments with John Waters, the first one titled *'The Nutshells'* (2 minutes 42 seconds – anamorphic widescreen) and the second one titled *'Frances Glessner Lee'* (2 minutes 36 seconds – anamorphic widescreen). Other extras include a third segment that discusses the missing Nutshell (1 minute 4 seconds – anamorphic widescreen), a featurette titled *'The Patron Saint of Forensic Medicine'* (5 minutes 33 seconds – anamorphic widescreen) and a audio commentary with director Susan Marks, producer / editor John Dean, cinematographer Matt Ehling and audio mixer Carly Zuckweiler. All of the extra is very informative, especially the audio commentary that also gives a well rounded look into the *'Making of'* a documentary. Overall *Of Dolls And Murder* gets a first rate release from Seminal Films.



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