

Dying to be Beautiful

Dr Kathryn Harkup



Beauty's Lot.

A scientific history of vanity

Dying to be Beautiful

Fatal attractions

Throughout history humans have sought to embellish and augment their physical appearance. As fashions change new contraptions, cosmetics and costumes are devised. There has often been little regard given to comfort and well-being when it comes to the body beautiful, and as this talk illustrates, some fashions can be fatal.



The Talk

30 to 60 minutes to any number of people

This talk looks at some of the stranger and more dangerous fashion trends in history. Toxic and corrosive substances were applied, swallowed and injected for the perfect complexion. Agonies were endured and lives risked for a perfect smile. From poisons to python poo and false teeth to face paint we will explore the perils of trying to obtain personal perfection.



Curriculum Links

Suitable for Sixth Form

This talk relates to science curriculum topics on infectious disease and the body's defenses; cell structure, and transport; enzymes; nerves; muscles; the eye; making salts; carboxylic acids.



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