

SUMPTUARY LAW

The materials and fabrics used for clothing in Elizabethan reign were dictated by the English Law of the Country. These laws were called Sumptuary laws and they were made to define people according to their status and position in the society. Fashion also took geometric shapes and forms inspired by the mathematics and

COLOR

The colors of Elizabethan clothes provided information about the status of the person wearing them. A person who wore purple clothes would be immediately recognised as a member of royalty. Gold, silver, crimson or scarlet, deep indigo blue, violet colors and even deep black and pure white colors were only worn by the highest nobility in the land.

MATERIAL

Upper classes wore a variety of expensive clothing made of velvets, satin, furs, silks, lace, cottons and taffeta. Many of these sumptuous materials were imported from foreign countries. These exotic materials were introduced in earlier centuries by Knights returning from the crusades. Silks and cottons were imported from the Middle East and velvet was imported from Italy.

OUTER CLOTHING

1. False sleeves created an elegant style when elongated at the back to drape down to the floor, waist, or elbows.
2. Enormously padded trunk sleeves, cut wide from the shoulder and narrowing to the wrist. Sleeves were also detachable to mix and match with different garments.
3. Bodices covered the corset and formed the torso of the garment. There were two different types of bodices, a high neck and a low neck.
4. The bodice was reinforced stomacher, a pointed, narrow panel of stiff fabric, embroidered or oversewn with jewels, which ended in a deep V shape.
5. In order to soften the sharp line of the farthingale, a frill of pleated over skirt was added, which only served to make the wearer look as if she were wearing a tablecloth.
6. An underskirt, or kirtle, covered the farthingale. The front of the underskirt, was highly decorated as it formed the front of the gown.
7. An overskirt which was split in the middle to reveal the front panel of the kirtle was attached to a bodice to form the gown.

UNDER CLOTHING

1. A smock, is a undergarment worn to protect outer clothing from sweat and body oils.
2. Corsets were worn under gowns to give a flattened and triangular shape. They were also laced from the front.
3. A French farthingale was worn beneath gowns. A farthingale was a circular hoop

ACCESSORIES

1. Made of very fine, almost transparent linen, the ruff was gathered into pleats which were arranged in different patterns. The ruff was supported by a wire frame known as an underpropper or supportasse.
2. Gloves were an expensive luxury. They were often made with sheep or deer leather, and richly decorated. Gloves were worn on the belt rather than hands as they were a symbol of wealth and status. Gloves could be jewelled, embroidered, laced and even scented. The scent added to the idea of wealth and luxury.
3. Fans were sometimes worn at court, disguising identities and making women, in particular appear unapproachable and formidable, like queen Elizabeth herself.

ELIZABETHAN
FASHION



ANCIENT EGYPT 3100 BCE

One of the first civilisations recorded for using cosmetics was the Egyptians, using lead to manufacture their eyeliner. The eyeliner itself, was made of copper, lead ore, malachite (bright green paste of copper minerals), and its main ingredient khol. It was also belived to protect the user from disease.

THE DAMAGE

The use of lead repeatedly over time can lead to lead poisoning. Symptoms include abdominal pain, neurologic changes, and irritability. At very high levels, it can be fatal.



ROMAN EMPIRE 27 B C

The ancient Romans ideal appearance would be a pale face and rosy cheeks and lips. They would achieve this rosy cheeked look by applying cinnabar and red lead, which is also commonly known as rouge. Cinnabar is derived from mercury ore which is highly toxic.

THE DAMAGE

Long and heavy exposure to mercury can lead to erethism, or Mad Hatters' disease. It can also cause kidney damage, rashes, skin discoloration, scarring, and psychosis.



ELIZABTHEAN ERA 1558

The ideal complexion during this era was a pale one that never saw the light of day. Lead was mixed with vinegar to make ceruse, which was a creamy white paste. It visually smoothed out the face covering smallpox scars, which many women suffered from during this era.

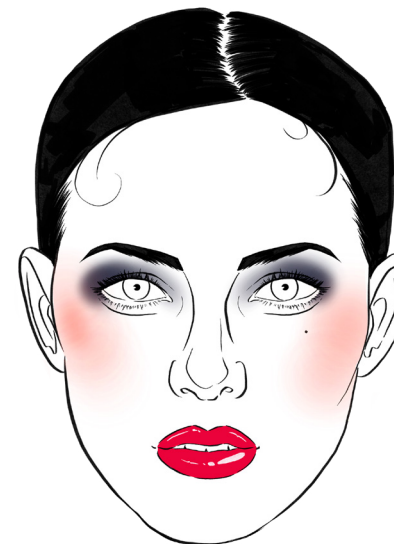
THE DAMAGE

Using ceruse over time, women poisoned themselves slowly, and in the meantime, suffered side effects like grey hair, wrinkly skin, abdominal pain, and constipation, and eventually death.



TOXIC BEAUTY

Throughout history, humans have been willing to try almost any method or product to improve their physical appearance. In response, enterprising businesses and beauty moguls have conspired to sell us almost anything from water to poison in the guise of cosmetic treatments. While many cosmetic products have eventually proven to have little efficacy, a significant number have also caused physical harm and even death.

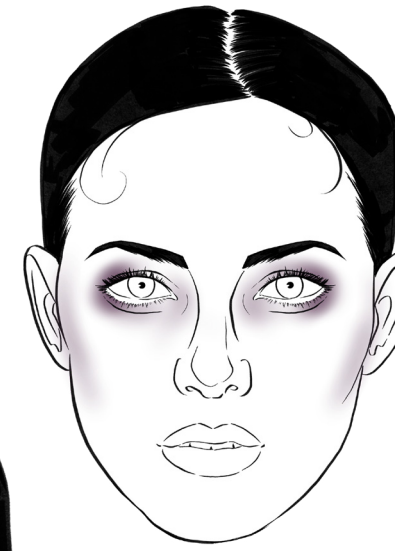


VICTORIAN ERA 1837

Once lead was out of the picture, arsenic took its place as the next pale complexion product. In the late 19th century newspapers advertised tins of wafers that, if eaten promised to remove freckles, pimples, and other facial marks. This product was called "Arsenic Complexion Wafers."

THE DAMAGE

Taking arsenic destroys red blood cells, which leads to that desired pale skin, and eventually, death. Other than death, they could also make you loose hair and go bald.

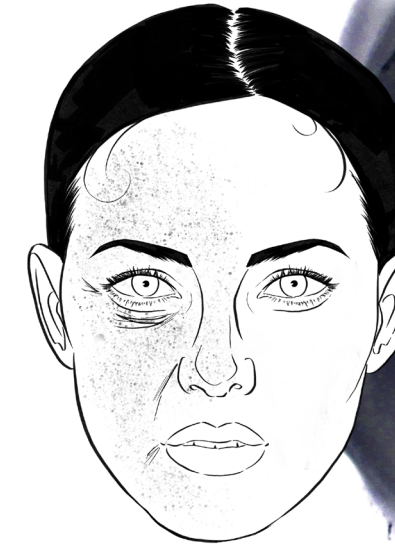


PARIS, FRANCE 1933

Miracle cream was launched in Paris in 1933. Billed as a "scientific beauty product," it promised to improve circulation, firm muscle tissue, reduce fat and smooth wrinkles. It was part of a line of cosmetics called Tho-Radia after thorium and radium, the radioactive elements it contained.

THE DAMAGE

Exposure to Radium over time may result in an increased risk of some types of cancer, particularly lung and bone cancer. Higher doses could also cause anemia, broken bones, and broken teeth.



MODERN DAY

We would never assume that makeup today would be toxic but, about seven years ago, the Campaign for Safe Cosmetics found lead in over half of the 33 brands of lipstick they tested. A more recent study by the FDA tested popular brands and found 400 that contained up to 7.19ppm of lead.

THE DAMAGE

Traces of lead is found through the color additives that gives lipstick its color. Lead is a proven neurotoxin linked to miscarriage, and delays in the onset of puberty for females.

