

Fashion

Today's fashions less harmful to women than in past

It's possible that no other industry experiences the constant change that is witnessed in the beauty and fashion industry.

New looks explode onto the scene, rocking the status quo, and sometimes just as quickly, fade into vague memories.

One of the most interesting evolution of women comes from the development of beauty rituals and habits.

Throughout time, women have been bombarded with home remedies and technology, cure-alls and guarantees - from contraptions that promised to reshape their noses and reduce their chins to foreign teas that assured the blooming of a fuller, more beautiful bosom.

Beauty rituals can be traced as far back as 51 B.C., to ancient Egypt, when Cleopatra would bathe in milk to soften her skin.

The 1920s witnessed a short trend dubbed "cosmetic beading," when American movie stars like Theda Bara applied drops of a hot waxlike material to the tips of their eyelashes for a sultry look.

Fifty years later, Farrah Fawcett's "feathered" hairstyle, on *Charlie's Angels* took the country by storm and was copied, in some regions, for more than a decade.

Today, laser and plastic are available on an outpatient basis. And, the future is sure to hold more amazing developments and discoveries.

The following timeline highlights some of the most amazing trends

• Elizabethan Age into the 1800s - to hide smallpox scarring and to avoid the sunburned appearance of laborers, women apply whiteners to their faces.

• Early 1880s - Women ingest arsenic, vinegar and chalk to lighten their skin. Illness and sometimes death follows.

• Circa 1850 - The arrival of the Gibson Girl heralds America's new ideal. Drawn by Charles Dana Gibson, she is beautiful, confident, wise and often accompanied by at least one besotted man. To many, she serves as a standard for the nascent feminist movement.

• 1910 - Makeup finally enjoys widespread use in the United States,

20 years after Queen Alexandra of England begins using cosmetics for evening events.

• 1920 - After a mention in a 1911 Vogue report on the beauty habits of other cultures, Kohl debuts in America as a precursor to mascara.

• 1928 - The sun-tanned look becomes popular and the first cosmetic sunscreen appears.

• 1938 - The Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act outlaws both the use of harmful ingredients in cosmetic products and

misleading claims in advertising.

• 1943 - With stockings unavailable due to the war, women begin painting their legs with flesh-toned body cosmetics, which spot and blotch in the rain.

• 1952 - An amendment to the Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act is proposed, stating that all cosmetics should be chemically pretested and that all labels should list ingredients.

• 1954 - The first cream concealer is intro-

duced, to the relief of teenagers nationwide.

• 1969 - Hair is long and hair dryers go from portable bonnet cases to hand-held blowers.

• 1974 - Model Beverly Johnson creates a

stir from coast to coast as Vogue's first black cover girl.

• 1980s - The body is sculpted to perfection via aerobic exercise.

• 1981 to 1988 - Baby boomers begin to

sag and plastic surgery experiences a 63 per cent rise.

• 1985 - Suntans give way to sun protection.

• 1990s - Dermatologists use lasers to help erase lines and wrinkles.

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