

The Bicycle Face Scare: The Victorian Era's Fear of Women Becoming Ugly from Cycling

By Melkisedeck Leon Shine · July 3, 2023

1000+ Inspiring Real Stories · Inspiring Historical Stories From all Over the World

? January 1897: The Bicycle Face Scare: The Victorian Era's Fear of Women Becoming Ugly from Cycling ?????

? Extra! Extra! Read all about it! In the late 19th century, a peculiar fear gripped the people of Victorian England. It was a fear that women, once sedate and delicate creatures, would transform into hideous beasts known as "Bicycle Faces" as a result of the newfangled contraption known as the bicycle! ??

? Let's take a ride back in time to the year 1897, where corsets were in fashion, and the streets were ruled by horse-drawn carriages and the occasional pedestrian.

? Meet Miss Amelia Bloomfield, a young lady of twenty-three who defied societal norms by indulging in the exhilarating world of cycling. She loved the feeling of the wind in her hair and the freedom of gliding through the streets on her trusty two-wheeler.

? But little did Miss Bloomfield know that her newfound passion would soon become the center of a widespread panic that swept across the nation.

? The first whispers of the Bicycle Face scare emerged in the spring of 1897. Concerned citizens claimed that excessive cycling caused women's faces to contort into grotesque shapes. They argued that the constant jostling and exposure to the elements would inevitably lead to the dreaded Bicycle Face. ??

? The press, always eager for a sensational story, seized the opportunity to stoke the fears of the masses. Headlines screamed warnings such as "Beauty at Risk: Cycling the Road to Ugliness" and "Are Ladies Courting Disfigurement with Their Bicycles?"

??????????? Even esteemed medical professionals joined the fray, citing "irrefutable" evidence that cycling would result in wrinkles, red noses, and sagging jowls. They claimed that the pressure on the handlebars would cause blood to rush to the face, creating a permanent flush.

? The Bicycle Face scare reached its zenith during a highly publicized lecture by the renowned Dr. Arthur Wilkins. On a gloomy November evening, at the prestigious Royal Society of Medicine, Dr. Wilkins declared, "Beware, ye fair maidens! For the bicycle shall strip you of your beauty and leave you disfigured!"

? Miss Bloomfield, hearing of this lecture, decided to attend and challenge the doctor's claims. Dressed in her cycling outfit, she boldly stood up and declared, "Sir, I have been cycling for months, and my face remains as lovely as ever!"

? The crowd gasped, but Dr. Wilkins, ever the gentleman, acknowledged her courage and asked her to share her experiences. Miss Bloomfield regaled the audience with tales of her joyful rides, the laughter shared with friends, and the vibrant health she had gained.

? The press, sensing a new angle, eagerly covered Miss Bloomfield's story. The tide began to turn, and the public's fear slowly morphed into admiration. Women across the country dusted off their bicycles and took to the streets, reclaiming their right to be active and independent.

? And so, the Bicycle Face Scare became a relic of the past. Miss Amelia Bloomfield, the courageous cyclist, became a symbol of defiance against societal restraints. Her story reminds us that fear often dissipates when confronted with knowledge and courage. ?????

? January 2022: Today, as we hop on our modern-day bicycles, let us remember the brave trailblazers who fought against the Bicycle Face scare and paved the way for the freedom we enjoy today. Keep pedaling, my friends! ???

Printable AckySHINE Article · <https://ackyshine.com/post.php?post=39512>