

HISTORY

DEADLY SCIENCE I

6 x 52' (ENG, GER)

Humanity's drive to push the bounds of the known world sometimes results in tragedy – but science still remembers the breakthroughs.

Explorers get caught in a storm. Inventors are taken down by their own machines. Great thinkers face persecution, launching ideas before society is ready. Though these martyrs of the mind suffered greatly for their brilliance, their work echoes through the long arc of history. From Spanish physician Servetus, burned at the stake for daring to advance medical knowledge, to George Mallory who may have been the first to the summit of Everest, to Marie Curie who pushed the science of radiation too far, and Dian Fossey, famed ape researcher, found murdered at her camp. Who were these men and women – and what are their stories? What gifts did they give humanity before they paid the price? Deadly Science tells the story of iconic inventors, scientists, and explorers who paid an extreme price for their work. Using archive material, experts, CGI and historic reenactments, we bring them and their inventions back to life. How did these pioneers change industry, inquiry, and the world with their ideas, setting us on a new path? What ideas came out of their work and where have they taken us in the modern world?



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1. Dangerous Heights

Since the beginning of humankind, gravity has ensured that we are firmly anchored to the earth. But humans are ambitious beings, always striving for the next conquest and pushing the limits of what is possible. What made us take to the skies - and who were the dreamers who dared to defy gravity? Although they have worked to make the once impossible possible, some of them have failed along the way. From Amelia Earhart, who lived a life of firsts, to the test pilots of the Apollo, to Franz Reichelt, the flying tailor, this episode tells the gripping stories of tragic heroes who risked their lives in the name of science.

2. Female Inventors

When the future seems just around the corner, who can say who is the right person to grab it? Although the history of science and discovery has always favoured the male gender, many women have also fearlessly ventured into the exciting unknown. Discovery, invention, creation, and exploration may involve risks, but who were the women who fearlessly faced the unknown? Icons of science with legendary histories of innovation, these women paved the way for the modern world. The fascinating stories of Marie Curie, Dian Fossey and Elisabeth Fleischmann show that it was worth fighting for, even if it meant risking your own life.

3. Against Nature

Mother Nature is complex and powerful. She can be beautiful, but she can also be deadly. She gives life, but can also destroy it. Understanding nature - its rules, its intricacies - has been a task for millennia. Some brave people put themselves at risk to learn more. Who are the people risking their lives to learn more about nature? Who is brave enough to go where no one has gone before? In the name of science, Tim Samaras opposed tornadoes. David A. Johnston descended into lava-spewing craters and George Mallory dared to scale a peak unseen before.

4. Long Forgotten Tracks

Off the beaten track, on the fringes of the known universe, in the furthest corners of creation, secrets are waiting to be revealed. Under mounds of the earth untouched for millennia, in the depths of the Brazilian rainforest, in the most inaccessible places, we find the seeds of great ideas, traces of ancient civilizations, and the remains of creatures we can hardly imagine. But these forgotten tracks harbor dangers, and history's bravest have risked everything to find them. From two paleontologists "History's Bravest", to Percy Fawcett, who never returned from the depths of the jungle, to Nikolai Vavilov, the Russian botanist who risked his life in the name of science.

5. In the Name of Medicine

Advances in medicine are never easy and often controversial. Early scientists had to take great risks to understand the human body and make life-saving discoveries. Vaccines, blood transfusions, and simply understanding how the human body works were considered blasphemous, impossible, or even ridiculous at one point, and would never become a reality until they actually became a reality! But disregarding authority and probabilities came with great risk. In bizarre self-experiments, three courageous men named Jesse William Lazear, Alexander Bogdonow and Michael Servetus defied the status quo and risked their lives in the process.

6. Ahead of Their Time

When a world-changing idea appears out of nowhere, what happens to those brave enough to bring it to light? When disruptors trample the world and cry out for new understanding and science, history remembers those brave visionaries who were willing to pay the ultimate price. For Galileo, one of the world's first scientific icons, or Hypatia, an ancient philosopher who made her voice heard among the powerful, and Giordano Bruno, a rebellious, itinerant scholar who lectured on cosmology, uncovering the truth was important - no matter how much she shook the foundations.