**They Lost Their Heads!**
Carlyn Beccia

**GENRE:** biographies, science, humor

**BOOK SUMMARY**
Notable people throughout history had strange and disgusting postmortem misadventures. Whether a scientist, artist, or politician, some famous bodies or particular parts were embalmed, frozen, sold, and stolen! Gruesome trivia about ordinary people is included as this informative book examines attitudes towards death in different times and cultures. It describes gross-out facts in short segments that can stand alone or be enjoyed cover to cover.

**BOOK TALK**
Most biographies focus on what people did during their lives. This one explores what happens to bodies, or at least portions of them, after the demise of their famous owners. George Washington’s teeth troubles are legendary, but did you know that his dentures were stolen from the Smithsonian? How much would you pay for Einstein’s eyes? Rumor has it that Michael Jackson attempted to buy them. Even Elvis Presley’s wart was sold to a collector! If you can handle some gross realities of flesh and bone, you’re in for funny and fascinating true tales. Don’t miss a chance to find out about medical practices and burial customs you’ll be grateful we’ve improved upon since the deaths of these historical figures.

**LINKS TO HELPFUL WEBSITES**
- **Official Book Trailer:** Scholastic [https://youtu.be/ftvgs8VCrJc](https://youtu.be/ftvgs8VCrJc)
- **Author Carlyn Beccia:** [http://www.carlynbeccia.com](http://www.carlynbeccia.com)
- **TeachingBooks.net through INSPIRE:** [www.teachingbooks.net/qlr6obn](http://www.teachingbooks.net/qlr6obn)

**MAKERSPACE ACTIVITY**
- Forensics used in modern crime solving are also tools historians use in this book. Ideas for making sense of the past as forensic anthropologists are found in the CSI Experience ‘No Bones About It’ guide. [http://forensics.rice.edu/en/For-Educators/Educators-Guide.html](http://forensics.rice.edu/en/For-Educators/Educators-Guide.html)

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**
1. What was the creepiest body part someone saved from their dearly departed? “Loved to Death”, e.g.
2. Some of the corpses at medical schools were provided by grave robbers. Do you think more people are willing to donate their body to science today? Why or why not? “Invasion of the Body Snatchers”
3. People have been buried with all sorts of belongings. Which made sense to you? “Bury the Hatchet”

**IF YOU ENJOYED THIS BOOK, YOU MIGHT ALSO LIKE**
- **Biographies, science, humor:** *How They Croaked* by Georgia Bragg
- **Science, humor:** *Human Body Theater* by Maris Wicks
- **Nonfiction by the same author:** *Fashion Rebels: Style Icons Who Changed the World through Fashion*

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