

Flat Earth Theatre Presents

RADIUM GIRLS

BY D.W. GREGORY



September 4th – 19th 2015
Charlestown Working Theater
Charlestown, MA

“EVERYTHING IS BAD FOR YOU”

by David N. Rogers, Dramaturg

It's easy to think of the New Jersey dialpainters who became known as the Radium Girls as being the victims of a lack of scientific progress. *If only they had known*, we might say to ourselves. *Thank goodness we understand these things so much better now*. But it's important to note that—as D.W. Gregory's play portrays—the cause of the dialpainters' suffering is more complex than the absence of a certain scientific breakthrough. Some scientists had warned about the dangers of radium before the first dialpainter was ever hired. But that message wasn't heard or accepted even by most scientists. Radium was already being sold as a health tonic, celebrated as a cure-all and, yes, used to make glow-in-the-dark watches. Radium was already part of people's hopes; worse, it was already tied to people's fortunes.

In other words, it wasn't just a lack of information that made Grace Fryer, Kathryn Schaub and the others sick; it was the greed of those who stood to profit from radium—not just Arthur Roeder and the executives of US Radium, but also the government officials and scientists whose accomplishments and reputations were tied to radium, or to corporations that used it. And it was also the willful blindness of an America that desperately wanted to believe in a miracle cure.

And while we've learned some facts about radiation since the 1920s, greed and self-deception are still very much with us. Health fads still explode into the popular consciousness with the most tenuous scientific support (radium was the “one weird trick” of its day, after all), and we cling to them even when they're disproven or thrown into doubt by further study. Experts employed to study a problem by private industry still tend to return results that are beneficial to their employers. And over and over again, corporations show they're still willing to be reckless with the welfare of ordinary people, in any number of ways.

Yes, we know enough not to drink or eat radium, now—but who knows what mistakes we're making today, in corporate board rooms or in laboratories or in what we choose to buy at the grocery store, that will seem horrifying with the benefit of hindsight?

If you want an emblem of how relevant the story of the New Jersey dialpainters still is, look no farther than the American obsession with the quality of our food. Is it organic? Is it genetically modified? How many calories? You'll live longer if you stay away from fat; no, from carbohydrates; no, from gluten; no, from sugar. These questions and uncertainties and dogmas arise from a conviction that something must be wrong with many of the things we put in our bodies, and a scramble to find a safe way to eat and live amidst conflicting claims and information.

I tell the same joke every time someone tells me that a study shows some new food or activity is bad for you. You've probably heard it before: “That's ok. Everything is bad for you.” Because the truth is, as a society, we still don't really know what's bad for us. Ultimately, we're all just making choices and hoping—just like the dialpainters did.

Most of us will never be poisoned quite like the dialpainters were, but we all live in a world where health is at the center of a confusing amalgamation of knowledge, money, and politics. We can only hope to navigate it all with as much courage as the New Jersey dialpainters as portrayed in *Radium Girls*, holding to the truth and defending ourselves and our loved ones against powerful forces amid great uncertainty. And though we can't predict perfectly what will turn out to be bad for us, we can recognize the poisonous actions and attitudes of the people who, intentionally or not, bedeviled the ailing dialpainters: complacency, prejudice, arrogance, and callousness. And those toxins, at least, we can strive never to imbibe.

Radium Girls

by D.W. Gregory
directed by Lindsay Eagle

Flat Earth Theatre and the cast and crew of *Radium Girls* would like to dedicate this production to the memory of Henry A. Seeger Jr., proud father of Marty Mason.

CAST

Grace Fryer	Erin Eva Butcher
Arthur Roeder	Bridgette Hayes
Katherine Wiley, et al.	Kamelia Aly
Dr. Von Sochocky, et al.	Katie Bond
Tom Kreider, et al.	Katharine Daly
Sob Sister, et al.	Paola M. Ferrer
Charlie Lee, et al.	Kristen Heider
Kathryn Shaub, et al.	Kathleen C. Lewis
Diane Roeder, et al.	Marty Mason

STAFF

Producer	Jake Scaltreto
Stage Managers	Caitlin Mason
	Amy Lehrmitt
Tech Director	Adam J. Teti
Set Designer	Debra Reich
Lighting Designer	Chris Bocchiaro
Costume Designer	Stephanie K. Brownell
Sound Designer	Patrick Greene
Makeup Designer	Juliet Bowler
Property Master	Lindsay Alaimo
Dramaturg	David N. Rogers
Assistant Tech Director	Leigh Downes
Master Electrician	Matt Arnold
Lighting Assistant	Noah Simes
Marketing Liaison	Lindsay Eagle
Graphic Design	Cara Chiaramonte
Board Op	Caitlin Mason
Accent Coach, Von Sochocky	Natalia Musatova
House Manager	Chris Chiampa

Originally produced by Playwrights Theatre of New Jersey and developed with a commissioning grant from The Ensemble Studio Theatre/Alfred P. Sloan Foundation Science and Technology Project.

Radium Girls is produced by special arrangement with THE DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY of Woodstock, Illinois.

BIOS

Kamelia Aly (Katherine Wiley, et al.) is thrilled to be a part of her first Flat Earth production, and to be working with a talented cast and crew! She was last seen on stage playing with imaginary beasts in *Hairy Tales* (Mrs. Beane/Ensemble) and in *Little Giants* (Ensemble). Other favorite roles include Beth in *The Beebo Brinker Chronicles*, Marela in *Anna in the Tropics*, and Jennifer Brady in *And Then There Were None*, all at the Footlight Club. Kamelia has also performed in a few short plays with Another Country Productions' SLAMBoston, as well as with Boston Actors Theater, and has trained with Lyrallen Kaye and Marcus Stern. Thanks to Lindsay for giving me the challenge of creating three different characters, and for the opportunity to help tell this amazing story!

“My folks didn’t raise me to make trouble. So I didn’t make trouble. I did what I was told. I never asked questions.”

—Grace Fryer

Katie Bond (Dr. Von Sochocky, et al) is delighted to be returning to the stage of Flat Earth Theatre as Dr. Von Sochocky, founder of the U.S. Radium Corporation. She was last seen as Mrs. Higgins in Flat Earth's production of *Pygmalion*. Katie has also appeared recently as Hecuba in Artist's Theatre of Boston production of *Trojan Women: A Love Story*. In addition to Boston, she has acted in many productions in Seattle, Spokane and Philadelphia and was a company member of Hedgerow Theatre, America's first repertory theatre. She is in the process of writing a one-woman piece about her experience as a hospice chaplain. She sends her love and thanks to her sons for putting up with her crazy actor's schedule (and for hogging the car).

Erin Eva Butcher (Grace Fryer) is excited to make her Flat Earth debut! Previous credits include *Kerplolt*, *Lover's Quarrels*, and *Hairy Tales* (imaginary beasts). *Blue Window* (Brown Box Theatre Project), *The Forgetting Curve* (Bridge Rep of Boston), *Hamlet* (Wax Wings Productions), *Uncle Vanya* (Apolinaire Theatre Company). Erin is Artistic Director of Maiden Phoenix Theatre Company—a Boston based company committed to telling stories about women. MPTC will present its first New Play *Miss Penitentiary* by Laura Neubauer this October. www.maidenphoenix.org Erin would like to thank her family, friends, and Jeff for their love and support, and the Universe for conspiring on her behalf.

Katharine Daly (Tom Kreider, et al.) is a graduate of The Gaiety School of Acting, National Theatre School of Ireland. Since her return to the United States, she has performed with Unreliable Narrator and The Post-Meridian Radio Players. *Radium Girls* is Katharine's second performance with Flat Earth Theatre, following the role of Pem in *The Farnsworth Invention*. She would like to thank her friends, and especially her family. This is all their fault.

Paola Ferrer (Sob Sister, et al.) is thrilled to tackle her first assignment with Flat Earth Theatre. Other favorite credits include The Singer/Governor's Wife in *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*, The Player in *Rosencrantz & Guildenstern Are Dead* (Apolinaire Theatre Company), the Mother in Federico García Lorca's *Blood Wedding* (Escena Latina Teatro), the Wife/Smoke Singer in *The Good Person of Setzuan* (Fort Point Theatre Company), and various TV and radio commercials, including one where she gets to ride her beloved bike. When not on stage, she is an attorney, non-profit director and community activist.

Bridgette Hayes (Arthur Roeder) is Boston-based actor, designer, playwright, and dramaturg. She recently joined Bridge Repertory Theater as an Artistic Associate, having worked with them last season in their production of *Julius Caesar*. In November, she will be playing the role of Procne in The Hub Theatre Company's production of *The Love of the Nightingale*. Later this year, she will

be dramaturging Bridge Rep's productions of *Salome* and *The Launch Party* (written by MJ Halberstadt) and working as costume designer on *Mud Blue Sky*, directed by Bridget O'Leary. Bridgette holds a BFA in Acting from Boston University's College of Fine Arts, a Certificate of Classical Acting from the London Academy of Music & Dramatic Arts, and is finishing a Masters in Dramatic Arts at Harvard University. Check out her website at www.thebridgettehayes.com.

Kristen Heider (Charlie Lee, et al.) is a new Bostonian delighted to be making her Flat Earth debut. Somewhat bizarrely for an introvert, she has been using acting to exorcise her demons since the age of eight. She attended The Gaiety School of Acting, the National Theatre School of Ireland. Previous shows include *The Children's Hour*, *Juno and the Paycock*, and *Ophelia: A Love Story*. In October, she will be seen—or rather, heard—as Elizabeth in The Post-Meridian Radio Players' production of *Frankenstein*. Her deepest thanks go to the Mysterious P., who make her feel loved and (mostly) sane, even on her worst days.

Kathleen Lewis (Kathryn Shaub, et al.) is a Boston-based actor that is currently workshoping an original physical theatre piece written by Kevin Kautzman, called *Vasilisa Most Lovely*. It involves shadows, puppets, dance, a baba yaga, and a doll that comes to life. She is a member of Beau Jest Moving Theatre, a Boston-based physical theatre company whose most recent endeavors include an original film noir play titled *4D*, which is touring and just finished a performance at Celebration Barn in Maine. She has had the pleasure of bringing a world premiere to the Provincetown Tennessee Williams Fest, and most recently a production called *Camino Real*. She just performed in the Commons in the Outside the Box Festival with Fort Point Theatre's InterActions compilation with Boston Bohemia. She can't wait to share *Radium Girls* with Boston.

“We are the world’s largest supplier of radium. You know what it took for us to get here!”

—Arthur Roeder

Marty Mason (Diane Roeder, et al.) is thrilled to be performing with Flat Earth Theatre again! You may have seen her onstage with them in *The Memorandum* and *Widows*. Other recent productions include *A Play About Nothing* (Broadside Theatricals) and *The Mousetrap* (Theatre @ First). Marty is also a member of Improv Jones Boston, performing every other Saturday at the Riot Theatre in Jamaica Plain.

Lindsay Eagle (Director) is an award-winning stage director and actor with a degree in Theatre from Suffolk University. In 2007, Lindsay co-founded the critically acclaimed fringe company The Independent Drama Society, which she led as Artistic Director for three years until its amicable end in 2011. During this period, she facilitated more than 15 full-length productions, including directing Neil Labute's *The Shape of Things* and Sarah Ruhl's *Eurydice* (nominated for Best Production - Small Theatre, IRNE Awards; awarded Best Director, MyTheatre Awards).

Since IDS, Lindsay has directed several full-length productions, including *From The Deep*, a new play by Boston playwright Cassie M. Seinuk (with Boston Public Works), Steven Dietz's *Rocket Man* and Ann Marie Healy's *What Once We Felt* (both with Flat Earth Theatre), and many smaller projects with The Charlestown Working Theatre, Interim Writers, and other companies. She has also acted with many local theatre companies, including Bridge Repertory Theatre, Fort Point Theatre Channel, Happy Medium Theatre Company, and Flat Earth Theatre. In 2014, she joined Flat Earth as a company member, and continues to work independently and collaborate with other local companies.

ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHT

D.W. Gregory writes in a variety of styles and genres, from historical drama to screwball comedy, but a recurring theme is the exploration of political issues through a personal lens. A resident playwright at New Jersey Rep, she received a Pulitzer nomination for the Rep's production of *The Good Daughter*, the story of a Missouri farm family struggling to adapt to rapid social change. Other plays include *The Good Girl Is Gone* (Playwrights Theatre), a black comedy about maternal indifference; *October 1962* (NJ Rep), a Cold War era psychological thriller; and *Molunby's Million* (Iron Age Theatre Co.), a comedy about the boxer Jack Dempsey, which was nominated for the 2011 Barrymore Award for Outstanding New Play by the Theatre Alliance of Philadelphia. Ms. Gregory is also founding member of the Playwrights Gymnasium, a process oriented workshop based in metro Washington, D.C.

ABOUT FLAT EARTH

Flat Earth Theatre has been collaboratively crafting thought-provoking theatre in greater Boston since 2006. Featured productions include the award-winning staging of *The Pillowman* with the IRNE-nominated shadow puppetry of Woellert&Clark, the dimension-traveling production of *Rocket Man*, and the New England premier of the sci-fi dystopia *What Once We Felt*. *Radium Girls* concludes Flat Earth's 2015 season "Progress and Peril," which kicked off with Ted Tally's *Terra Nova* in the winter, and continued with Aaron Sorkin's *The Farnsworth Invention* in June.

AUDIENCE SURVEY

We need your feedback! Please complete our audience survey to let us know about your experience. It only takes a couple of minutes, and your responses will help us evaluate and refine our process. Fill it out on paper, or online! Scan the QR code to take the survey, or visit flatearththeatre.com/survey.



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UPCOMING SHOWS

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JEANNE: The Story of a Woman

Fort Point Theatre Channel
September 11 – 12
fortpointtheatrechannel.org

The Rocky Horror Show

Footlight Club
September 18 – October 3
footlight.org

Troubled Water

Guerilla Opera
September 18 – 25
guerillaopera.com

The Love of the Nightingale

Hub Theatre
November 6 – 21
hubtheatreboston.org

The Importance of Being Earnest

Theatre@First
November 6 – 21
theatreatfirst.org

Fiddler on the Roof

Footlight Club
November 7 – 21
footlight.org

Clybourne Park

Longwood Players
November 13 – 21
longwoodplayers.org

Hard and Fast: A Love Story

Boston Public Works
November 20 – December 5
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