

Best Book Club with Shanna and Jen Podcast
Season 1, Episode 14 - March 31, 2021

The Radium Girls: The Dark History of America's Shining Women **by Kate Moore** **Book Club Discussion and Review**

Shanna: Hello Everyone and come to the Best Book Club podcast, I'm Shanna

Jen: And I'm Jen.

Shanna: March is Women's History Month, we chose to read a book that was written by a female author and also centered around women's issues as a theme and wow did this book ever check both of those boxes.

Jen: We read *The Radium Girls: The Dark Story of America's Shining Women* by Kate Moore. Kate Moore was born in Northampton, England. She studied English Literature at the University of Warwick. She is known for writing across various genres and is also a book editor and ghostwriter. Along with being a full time writer, she is also an actress. She first discovered the story of The Radium Girls when she directed a play called *These Shining Lives* that ran in London in 2015 and dramatized the experiences of the dial painters. While researching for the play, she realized that there was no book that focused on the women themselves so she decided to write the first narrative nonfiction account of this story.

Shanna: She actually has another book coming out this year! It comes out in June and it's called **The Woman They Could Not Silence: One Woman, Her Incredible Fight for Freedom, and the Men Who Tried to Make Her Disappear**. It's about a woman named Elizabeth Packard who in 1860 gets admitted to an insane asylum by her horrible husband, not because she is insane, but because she has a brain and a voice and her husband has had enough of her. Once there, she finds that most of the women are not insane and are there for the same reason as her. So, then we have another fight for the rights of these women.

Jen: I did not know about this book being released and when I found out I was SO excited. I think it sounds fantastic. I am not drawn to nonfiction very often and my nonfiction heart is reserved almost entirely for Brene Brown, but I've actually never really experienced "narrative nonfiction" and I think this is where it's at for me.

Shanna: Yes now that I have seen that term it makes a lot more sense to me! **Narrative nonfiction**, also known as creative **nonfiction** or literary **nonfiction**, is a true **story** written in the style of a fiction novel. The **narrative nonfiction** genre contains factual prose that is written in a compelling way—facts told as a **story**. I was really thrown off

when we first started this one because I kept expecting this to be historical fiction, but no fiction novel has that many citations, but also she was definitely making some interactions up, but they were highly plausible and made the story more ... story like. It just isn't a kind of narrative style I have really experienced before and I am interested in trying some more like this one.

Jen: Shall we read the synopsis?

Shanna: Why Yes we should!

Jen: The Curies' newly discovered element of radium makes gleaming headlines across the nation as the fresh face of beauty, and wonder drug of the medical community. From body lotion to tonic water, the popular new element shines bright in the otherwise dark years of the First World War. Meanwhile, hundreds of girls toil amidst the glowing dust of the radium-dial factories. The glittering chemical covers their bodies from head to toe; they light up the night like industrious fireflies. With such a coveted job, these "shining girls" are the luckiest alive — until they begin to fall mysteriously ill. But the factories that once offered golden opportunities are now ignoring all claims of the gruesome side effects, and the women's cries of corruption. And as the fatal poison of the radium takes hold, the brave shining girls find themselves embroiled in one of the biggest scandals of America's early 20th century, and in a groundbreaking battle for workers' rights that will echo for centuries to come.

Jen: Okay, Shanna, did you know about this story before reading this book? Because I had literally never heard of this before!

Shanna: Yes! I did! It has actually been on my radar for a while, but it was the nonfiction aspect of it that was keeping it in the TBR pile. I believe I first heard of it when it was mentioned on My Favourite Murder, the true crime podcast, and it sounded really interesting so I filed it away in my brain for later. I think that's right. It feels right.

Jen: Yes I have heard people mention that particular episode of My Favorite Murder so that definitely sounds right. Going into this book, though I did know that it was a true story, I did NOT realize that it was nonfiction. Like I've said, I am not a huge nonfiction reader so I was a bit nervous once I found that out but I actually ended up really really enjoying this book and "enjoy" is a horrible word for it because this story was actually horrific.

Shanna: So much more so than I expected it to be yes.

Jen: There were a few times when I thought that it got a little bit slow and repetitive, but over all this book had quite a lot of momentum. It did take me an exceptionally long time to read but it

wasn't because I was bored or slogging through it, but I was stopping quite a bit to sit with some of the information and also to learn more about what I was reading.

Shanna: Ok no, I did not do that, but it took me roughly one million years to finish. I was starting to suspect witchcraft due to how long it was taking me to finish. I had to switch to audio about halfway just to have a chance in hell of finishing it on time. And yeah, I totally agree, it wasn't due to the story, or the writing, I was loving it, and there was no reasonable explanation of WHY it was taking so long.

Jen: This book was very thoroughly researched and very well written. Every step of the way, the story was clear. It was almost as if she was able to foresee any questions that I might have and when I did have them, they were answered almost immediately which made the story flow very smoothly and I was kept completely enthralled. I absolutely loved it so much more than I expected to. I'm giving it five stars.

Jen: What about you, Shanna?

Shanna: Oooh I struggled. I gave it 4, but I don't know, it probably deserved 5. Well, the women and the story deserve 5, and the book was great, It was just really long. It took me so dang long to read. How about 4.5? Yeah, 4.5.

Shanna: Now that we've told you what the book is about and what we thought of it, we are going to go into the discussion so from this point on, there will be spoilers. Also, we should warn you that this episode contains graphic descriptions of the side effects of radium poisoning.

Jen: Yes and also if you don't want to read the book but still want to learn about this unbelievable story, keep listening because we are going to get into it - but yes we will be spoiling the book for those of you still waiting to read it. I think we need to go a little bit more in depth than the synopsis because the synopsis says basically nothing. Every line of this book was infuriating.

Shanna: I was so mad. I kept thinking, this is it, this has to be rock bottom, and then it would keep getting worse.

Jen: There is not way we can do justice to everything that happened in an hour long episode, but we will give you as much information as we can so that you don't necessarily have to read the book to know the story of these women

Jen: Okay so keep in mind that this is a true story. This is all for real.

Jen: We start the story in Orange, New Jersey in 1917 where a plant has opened up that produces radium and also a radium based luminescent paint. They employ a large number of women to use the paint to paint the numbers on watches and clock dials so that they would

glow in the dark. Most of these women, who were called dial painters, were very young. The ad for the job said that they had to be 18, but there is evidence that girls as young as 11 were employed there.

Shanna: At that time, it wasn't widely known how dangerous radium was. For those of you who don't really know what radium is, it's a radioactive element. It was discovered in 1898 by Marie and Pierre Curie and they actually won the nobel prize for the discovery and fun fact, she was the first woman to win the prize and also the first person to win it twice. Bam.

Shanna: We should actually say that the book really starts out with another scientist discovering that he has a burn on his skin that occurred because a tiny amount of radium in a glass vial burned him through the glass and through his clothes. So it was known that it was dangerous - which makes this whole thing make even less sense.

Jen: Anyways, this job was highly revered in the community. It was high paying - it paid three times as much as the average factory job, it was fun and the women were covered with the beautiful glowing radium dust that filled the air of the studio making them literally glow. They would purposefully wear their nicest dresses to work so that they would be covered and glowing for the parties in the evening. They would take the extra paint and paint themselves with it and play around in the dark. It was a super fun job.

Shanna: In hindsight of course, all of that is horrifying. But, if you don't know how dangerous it is, it sounds so fancy and fun and carefree. They really were living the life.

Jen: There was one line that I took note of because the book mentioned that there were women who took the job even for just a few days to see what it was like. The line was "women simply wanted to see what it was like to be one of the ghost girls: A kind of voyeuristic life tourism" What a great way to describe that. Voyeuristic life tourism.

Jen: They used paint brushes to paint the numbers on the dials and to get that fine pointy tip on their brushes, they would put them in their mouths and use their lips. It was a super common practice that became called "lip pointing" that was encouraged because it gave the crisp lines the company was looking for. Plus it was fast, and wasted the least amount of the very expensive paint.

Shanna: Some of the dial painters questioned the practice of lip pointing, but they were assured that the paint was completely safe and that there was such a miniscule amount of radium in the paint that it wouldn't hurt them. They were actually told that they should be grateful really because they were getting the amazing health benefits from it at no cost to them.

Shanna: I personally can't even imagine putting a paint brush in my mouth with paint on it. We have been doing a lot of painting over here lately, me and the 3.5 year old, so we have paintbrushes and stuff around. I didn't notice the baby grabbed one the other day, a clean one thank goodness, and next thing I see her walking up to me with the brush end in her mouth. Of

course my brain automatically thinks of this story and I was like NOOO NEVER PUT PAINT BRUSHES IN YOUR MOUTH!!! Anyways, yeah, this story is pretty firmly planted in my brain now.

Jen: I guess what they didn't account for when making this paint was the fact that these women would be ingesting the miniscule amount over and over over again every day, sometimes for years. Also, the men in the labs had lead vests and ivory tipped tongs and gloves and all this safety equipment. They knew that it was dangerous. I don't think it

Shanna: We should mention here that at that time it was believed that not only was radium safe, but that it was also good for you. It temporarily spiked red blood cell production I believe, so it was touted as being a cure for illnesses, people said that it would make you younger - all kinds of things. It was big in the beauty industry as well. They put it in toothpaste, chocolate, butter...it was everywhere.

Jen: Also, remember the part where the company offloaded industrial waste by selling it to schools and playgrounds because as it turned out, the residue from radium extraction looked like seaside sand. Unfortunately, it turned the children's shoes white, so that was no good...

Shanna: Oh goodness no I completely forgot about that. Holy crap. What in the actual hell?

Shanna: The first sign of trouble was in 1921 when one of the women, Mollie, had a tooth removed, but the wound refused to heal. So she continued to return to the dentist where he continued to remove teeth, but nothing helped. If anything, it made her condition worse to the point that her entire mouth was completely infected. This is where the book really started for me.

Jen: Okay, you warned me about this part and I was still not prepared for it. I would like to read it out because if you didn't read the book, you will not be able to comprehend the seriousness of this

Excerpt

Jen: To top it off, on her death certificate it was reported that her cause of death was Syphilis. Which I think then, was a much more dangerous infection than it is now since at that time, penicillin hadn't yet been invented, but still.

Shanna: Yes, apparently, Late stages of syphilis can cause tumors, blindness, and paralysis. It can damage your nervous system, brain and other organs, and may even kill you. Syphilis is easily curable with antibiotics in the early stages. If you get treatment late, it will still cure the infection and stop future damage to your body.

Jen: The diagnosis of syphilis, especially at that time was really damaging to the women and their families and could be used to keep them quiet about what they were going through via immense shame.

Shanna: It's such disgusting behaviour by the people who were supposed to be helping her. And professionals. So much horrible behaviour by so many people throughout this story it could be really hard to read and believe. I want to believe the best in people, but man, this story was disappointment after disappointment.

Jen: Radium poisoning also affected the women differently depending on where the radium settled most in their individual bodies. Radium acts like calcium in the way that it is absorbed by the bones, but instead of strengthening them, it literally eats away at them. So many women presented with jaw and tooth problems like Mollie because they were literally putting it in their mouths, but a lot of women also grew cancerous tumors, had spontaneous bone breaks, some of them had one of their legs actually shrink to be inches shorter than the other and a lot of them were severely anemic.

Jen: So now other women are starting to get sick and there were more deaths. It became obvious, but apparently not obvious enough that all these women had something in common. They all worked for the US Radium Corporation or the USRC. It was suspected that they were suffering from phosphorus poisoning because the symptoms were similar, but there was no phosphorus in the radium paint.

Shanna: I went ahead and googled up some pictures of Phossy jaw, and yeah, not pleasant. I do not recommend it.

Jen: So, the women are now trying to file complaints against the company, but no matter who they talk to, no one takes them seriously. There were a few studies done, but the results - though they did indeed prove that the women were right - were always buried or bought by the company.

Jen: USRC tried to hide what was happening in so many horrible ways over such a long period of time. They began doing medical examinations on the women, but their test results were released to the company and not to the women themselves.

Shanna: This actually blew my mind. I would be so mad, and the fact that the women just went with it tells me that this is just how things were. I remember at one point one of their husbands went to ask for it because he actually had a chance in hell of getting it. My husband should not have better access to my information than I do based on nothing more than his freaking genitalia. That's absurd and infuriating.

Shanna: In 1925, the first male employee of USRC died and this is when more people started paying attention. Of course. Ugh. I mean, I don't want the men to die either, preferably nobody would be dying, but I mean, ONE man has now died, so obviously it wasn't just these hysterical women making things up. Maybe there was such a thing as radium poisoning?

Jen: I really thought that here was where things would turn around, but while it made people study it a bit more and it prompted the company to cover itself even more thoroughly, it didn't

really change a lot. It wasn't really until the doctor who invented the paint died and also a rich guy who ingested thousands of bottles of radium tonic. After these men died was when the world started looking at this very big problem more closely.

Shanna: I was amazed that so many laws and regulations changed IMMEDIATELY when the rich guy died. I mean, there was probably a lot more going on, and we only have the context from this one story, which is a fairly narrow window to be looking at what was likely a much bigger and wide ranging issue at the time. But still, within the framework of this story, it was such a major contrast from the way the painters were treated it was super irritating.

Shanna: These factories were all over the United States and the world and this was happening everywhere. This book specifically focuses on these women in Orange and in Ottawa because they sued the companies they worked for and their cases helped change/instate employee safety laws

Jen: In 1927 five of the Orange women sued the company for compensation. There were Edna Hussman, Katherine Schaub, Quinta McDonald and Albina Larice and they were led by Grace Fryer who fought tirelessly against this company.

Shanna: I adored Grace.

Jen: One of the many things that worked against them and the USRC was able to build there defense on was that there was a law that would provide compensation for diseases contracted from working but the list had only 9 diseases on it - none of which were "jaw necrosis" and there was also a mere five month statute of limitations. Most of these women didn't start to even see symptoms until years after they stopped working for the company so there was nothing they could do.

Shanna: The statute of limitations was also a thing, and man, I hate that crap. Across the board it's such bull jive I won't even get myself started.

Jen: I think I recall that at a slightly higher court level the statute of limitations was two years instead of five months? Regardless, even then, it wasn't enough time for them for them all.

Jen: It took quite a long time for Grace -who btw wore a steel back brace because her spine was actually collapsing- to even find a lawyer who would take the case, but eventually a young lawyer, Raymond Berry, took it on and he interpreted the law differently so that his argument was that the statute of limitations did not begin when the women ceased working for the company but when it became clear that their symptoms were from radium poisoning. Especially since the company did everything they could to mislead the women for as long as they could.

Shanna: This felt like such a win for the women, but honestly anything that wasn't a total slap in the face felt like a win, which isn't exactly a high bar. I really appreciated Barry, since him and,

what, one doctor, and a couple of women in various positions were willing to do anything to help them at all. Oh, speaking of doctors,

Shanna: It also came out in this case that one of the doctors who had been examining these women was not even a doctor! "Dr." Flinn and to top it off, he remained on the case after it was revealed! I was flabbergasted.

Jen: I thought, "He is definitely getting fired" and then the next chapter starts and he is still there! What do you mean!?

Shanna: I just, how, how? HOW? Why didn't that matter. It mattered a whole heck of a lot to me.

Jen: In the end these cases were all settled out of court because it was clear that the women didn't have a lot of time left and the USRC while they had to pay out settlements, they continued to maintain that they were not actually responsible.

Jen: Also, the judge who presented the women with the settlement was a USRC stockholder.

Shanna: I mean, I can't.

Jen: They sent him and he convinced them that taking the settlement was in their best interest.

Jen: Because there were numerous painting studios at that time, one of the arguments was that if it was only happening at the one in Orange, New Jersey then it wasn't the radium that was doing it. It had to be something else.

Shanna: One of these other studios called The Radium Dial Company was located in Ottawa, Illinois. When women started to get sick there as well, no one had yet heard of radium poisoning so they were starting completely from scratch. None of the dentists or doctors had seen it. The company knew about it though and they did everything they could to stop the entire town from knowing what was going on.

Jen: One thing we really take for granted now, is how fast news travels or even how readily available almost all possible information is to us. Sometimes it's not exactly a good thing, but in cases like this, it would have been so helpful to know what was going on all over the country and the world.

Jen: The company began to do medical examinations on the women to show that they were concerned about their health and once again the women themselves were not given the results. Instead, sometimes they were flat out lied to. Even though they were beginning to exhibit the tell tale symptoms - sore teeth, aching bones - they were all told that they were in perfect health.

Shanna: I may have actually been screaming as I read this part. They also purposefully only examined the healthier of the women and left the sicker ones out of the examinations all together.

Jen: One of the women, Catherine, was fired after working for them for 9 years because she had developed a really bad limp and obviously they knew what it meant and she had become a liability. After that though, she got them back. She along with four other women - Marie Rossiter, Pearl Payne, and sisters Frances and Marguerite Glacinski filed a lawsuit against the company.

Shanna: Rage. I felt pure rage for this woman. She sacrificed everything, she was a model employee, and she believed in them and their crap, and this is how she was treated? I am running out of words, revolting! Shameless! Detestable!

Jen: Once again, no one wanted to touch this case and it was so hard for these women to obtain a lawyer to represent them because 1. The case seemed impossible and 2. They were going up against a huge corporation with tons of money and tons of people backing them. I guess also 3. They were women so that didn't exactly work in their favor. They also had a hard time finding experts to speak on their behalf. Even the dentist who had been treating the women in Orange for so long, went to the company and offered to lie if they paid him off.

Shanna: APPALLING! ATROCIOUS! DEPLORABLE!

Jen: The women had a court date but no lawyer. Luckily, just a few weeks before the date they found one. His name was Leonard Grossman, and he was a huge supporter of women's rights and was especially interested in representing workers compensation cases so this one was perfect for him.

Shanna: I loved him so much. He was a really good dude. Finally!

Shanna: They decided that Katherine would be the first one to tell her story because she was probably the most likely to die first. She was the sickest. When she got to be too sick to make it to the court house which was in Chicago I believe, they brought the court proceedings to her house in Ottawa - which I thought was pretty cool tbh - So that she would still be able to give her testimony.

Jen: In the end they won the case. But Radium Dial was not done fighting against it. They filed appeal after appeal, hoping to drag it out long enough that Katherine would die before they had to pay anything. And they succeeded. After news of their final appeal reached her, she just couldn't hang on any longer and she passed away. The case then went to the supreme court and they basically threw it out because obviously Radium Dial had no real case.

Shanna: So they did win. And their win sparked the development of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration along with various employee safety laws and also brought an end to

the casual use of radium in everyday products. These women fought, not for themselves but for the future of humanity. It's scary to think where we would be today if they had just accepted what they were being told.

Shanna: Okay, we have some discussion questions for you now.

Shanna: Trace the emotional trajectory of the women who worked with radium paint—from their initial excitement about their jobs to their realization that it was killing them.

Jen: I thought that it was so sad how these women started thinking that working as dial painters was such an amazing opportunity. There was a huge women's rights movement happening at that time with women winning the right to vote in 1918. There weren't a lot of jobs for women at that time and the dial painters were in the top 5% for women in the country which was huge. It was a very prestigious job and not only that, it was fun so going from being on top of the world, to being poisoned and watching their friends die and the fear that had to come along with it. My heart breaks for them.

Shanna: It could have, and should have, been a win for women.

Jen: What did you find most horrifying about the suffering the women were forced to endure as their health deteriorated? Did you find this story difficult to read?

Shanna: Well, come on, they were literally PULLING PIECES OF THEIR JAW OUT WITH THEIR FINGERS. BONES were BREAKING THROUGH THEIR SKIN. The physical body horror of Radium poisoning was so much worse than I imagined it was going to be going into this one.

Jen: There are very few books that I've read that were as upsetting as this one and I read horror. This was horror like I have never experienced before. Refer back to my reading of Mollie's death. This kind of thing happened to so many women. I could not even begin to imagine what they went through, the amount of pain they were in constantly, sometimes for years. And the worst part really, was that it was all for money. IN what world is any amount of money worth that kind of suffering.

Shanna: This one. This bloody stinking world and its ... come on there has to be another word. Repugnant.

Jen: Also one thing that I cannot get out of my mind is the fact that the radium in their bones was glowing. There were multiple accounts where like one woman realized that she had radium poisoning after catching a glimpse of herself in the bathroom mirror. Though the room was completely dark, she could see her reflection glowing back at her. Catherine Donohue's nephew reported that though she preferred to keep the curtains closed in the living room where she spent most of her time, there was a light in that room and that light was her. The exhumed one of their bodies to do an autopsy and the body in the coffin was glowing. Radium has a half

life of 1600 years and that means that these women are glowing in their graves still today and will be glowing for hundreds and hundreds of years to come.

Shanna: I was really hoping for a dramatic court case flourish where they turned out the lights and all the women were glowing. It didn't happen, but I was so ready for it.

Jen: What outraged you the most in terms of how these women were treated by numerous people and groups throughout the book?

Jen: Everything outraged me! Every. Single. Line of this book was infuriating. FOR REAL! I could not believe the nerve of these people. The sheer amount of deceit that

Shanna: These women had family and friends who loved them. The coldness and appalling behaviour by the company over money was unfortunately not surprising. These poor women were stripped of their humanity and their futures. It was so freaking sad. For money.

Shanna: Do you think that the press and the radium companies would have handled the situation differently if the dial painters had all been men?

Jen: At first, I wanted to say yes, this never would have happened to men! But when I thought more about it, I realized that if the dial painters had been men, this still would have happened because these women were working class, we were heading into the great depression and I don't really think that the company would have treated working class men any better.

Shanna: Yeah, I completely agree with that.

Jen: I do think that the courts and the press and the public would have reacted differently and I think that it wouldn't have dragged on quite as long as it had for the women. The men would have been believed and lawyers would have taken their case etc.

Shanna: Yes, also I think men would have been more likely to stand up and be heard, whereas a lot of the women seemed to be more timid about even admitting there was definitely something wrong.

Shanna: Even with modern science, medicine and laws to protect workers, do you think this is something that could still happen today?

Jen: Absolutely. Sam and I were saying last night when we were watching the movie called Radium Girls - which isn't based on this book but is a fictional account of a similar story - we were saying that 100 years from now, people could be watching a movie about something that is happening right now. And it's really got me thinking about all the little things that we know are bad for us, that we know are poison but we do put in or on our bodies anyways and it's terrifying. Also, we are in Canada, and I think that we've got pretty good laws, but even then, it's

up to the companies to follow them and the employees to report them if they aren't. And I know that there are places all over the world that don't have these laws, and the workers are treated unfairly and unsafely. So this is not an old problem, it's a current fight that we always need to be aware of.

Jen: Were you inspired by the "shining women"? If so, how can you use their strength to incite change in your own life?

Shanna: Totally. They did so much, and changed so much, and were one of the many steps taken by women over the years to help make the world a better and safer place for me and my daughter. I didn't know their story, but now that I do, and I know how much pain and hardship they went through while they fought, they are very inspiring to me.

Jen: Yes. At every step of this story, their strength was incredible to me. I don't know that I would have been able to go on the way that they did. It really put a lot of things in perspective for me and not that I can't have bad days, but sometimes I do need a reminder that if they can endure what they did, I can endure what's happening to me 100%.

Shanna: Were there any parts of the book that especially affected you or resonated with you?

Jen: The entire book affected me. From start to finish. I keep thinking back to Catherine Donohue's children though. Especially her daughter, and how she was only 10lbs at one year old. She grew up with a lot of difficulties and health problems and I don't think that it was ever proven that it was because of radium but, we can pretty much assume that it didn't help. It makes me think of all the babies that were conceived during that time, by everyone who was in contact with radium. Especially the baby girls because they are born with all their eggs and then their baby girls are born with all their eggs. People don't realize that the things that occur during a pregnancy can impact future generations in this way. So beyond the industrial clean up that needed to happen and beyond the bones of these women who are radioactive to this day, there could still be far reaching effects that we can't see.

Shanna: The kids and mothers are also what stuck out to me. These mothers knew they were dying and fighting so hard so they weren't leaving their children with nothing. Living everyday knowing that this poison was killing them and what and who they were leaving behind broke my heart over and over again. And all the women who wanted desperately to be mothers and couldn't carry children because of what the poison did to them. Some were unable to conceive, others were suffering miscarriages, and I remember one woman developed cancer in her uterus, and ended up having a hysterectomy. We don't stop being women if we lose our uterus, being a woman is a lot more than having a uterus, and many women choose to have this done, but it is a very important part of our bodies for a lot of women, and I don't think the emotional and physical impact of that loss, or any of those losses the women experienced should be understated.

Jen: Do you think that they got justice in the end? Was it enough?

Jen: No. They won but it wasn't enough and nothing could be enough really. These women changed the future of workers compensation and safety and still I had never heard of them before now. In school we are taught all about the wars. We are taught the dates of the battles and the names of the men - the heroes - but never once was this mentioned. Not only did these women paint the dials that would allow these men to see their watches and dials in the dark so that they could coordinate attacks without having to light their area and give themselves away, but they pioneered a movement that saves so many people. Why is this not also taught in school?

Shanna: These are the stories that need to be taught. I absolutely agree. There is so much cleaning up of the ugly parts of our history in school. What the radium companies did is shameful, and embarrassing, and they should be ashamed and embarrassed. Not teaching people that this stuff happens only helps it to happen again and again. It is also so important that our girls and boys know what these women went through, and why.

Jen: Alright, for April book club, we are reading *The Midnight Library* by Matt Haig. I am going to post the synopsis on our facebook page and on our instagram so go and check that out!

Shanna: I hadn't heard much about this one, but now that I have I am really excited to get started!

Shanna: To close out Women's History Month, we are going to end this episode a little bit differently. Poet, Brielle Crandall, whose work can be found in *Femme* magazine, is going to read her poem, (*heroine*).

Jen: *Femme* is an annual print magazine and platform dedicated to celebrating and empowering women through contributors' creative content. Their mission is to provide women with a platform to share their vulnerable stories through various creative mediums, with the end goal of celebrating and empowering their narratives. As a platform and print publication, they believe it is important for women to be able to take up space — and physically hold the stories of other women.

Jen: Thank you Brielle for joining and sharing with us today. And we will see you all next week.