

## Radium Girls

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Group Website

For our NHD website, we were aiming to choose a topic that was both local and significant. We began by researching potential topics that fit this year's theme. After reviewing many different possible ideas, we discovered an article about the "Radium Girls." They were women who worked at a radium factory in Orange, New Jersey who were exposed to radioactivity and, as a result, contracted many health issues, eventually dying from them. We were fascinated by this story and felt that it was extremely impactful and moving. Additionally, it worked well with this year's theme of *Rights and Responsibilities*.

To research, we first familiarized ourselves with the topic as a whole and what the significance of the Radium Girls was. Once we had a basic outline of our subject, we further researched by dividing up different aspects within our group for each of us to explore. We gathered pictures of the factory in Orange, New Jersey from the Library of Congress and found a speech from Marie Curie regarding her discovery of radium. Arushi researched information about the U.S. Radium Corporation and the conditions the women were working in, Amanda researched the lawsuit and the outcome of the event, and Kerry researched the history of radium and its dangers as well as how it applied to the women in the factory.

We chose to create a website for our project because we felt it was the most effective and well-organized way to convey the story of the Radium Girls. The topic we chose contained many different facets that we felt would be difficult to display on any other medium. By using Weebly to make our website, we could create something that was both organized and creative. With the usage of different pages and subpages all connected with hyperlinks, we were able to categorize different aspects of our topic. By adding different forms of media such as images, video, and audio, we could also add creativity and elegance.

This year's theme of *Rights and Responsibilities* fit perfectly with our topic, the Radium Girls. These women working in the radium dial factory were unaware of the dangers of radium, and the United States Radium Corporation had a responsibility to ensure a safe working environment for their employees. Women at the factory in Orange, New Jersey, were tasked with painting the dials on clocks. To maintain the shape of the brush, the workers would lick the paintbrush every few strokes. They even painted their nails and teeth for fun, as the radium paint was "glow-in-the-dark." They had no clue that they were ingesting a poison that would eventually kill them. Nobody knew except the US Radium Corporation executives who did nothing to stop it. The "Radium Girls" had a right to know the dangers of radioactivity in the substances they were working with, and it was the responsibility of their superiors to not only warn them, but also to take precautions to make sure their factories were safe working conditions.