

While searching for a topic to research for our 2023-2024 History Day project, we discovered the Radium Girls. We chose the Radium Girls because we found the story interesting and knew how much it could connect to the theme, Turning Points in History. The Radium Girls helped improve safety and labor laws. This eventually played a major role in the passing of the Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA), drastically changing working conditions and employees' safety. Our topic also impacted the way radium is handled today in the medical field.

Our research began at the Delano Public Library where we found many books, especially by author Kate Moore. We then went to the Minneapolis Public Library where we found an OSHA requirement manual. We continued researching with online articles, newspapers, and websites. We then conducted two interviews, the first being with Bert Coursey, a Radium historian at National Institute of Standards and Technology. He helped us understand how the Radium Girls impacted science. We also interviewed author Kate Moore, who has written many books about the topic. Interviewing her allowed us to better understand the Radium Girls' stories because Moore has met with their families.

After organizing our information, we put our script together. We decided how we could group our words together, forming the pages of our website. We also found pictures to help our audience visualize the story and impacts of the Radium Girls. Once our script was finalized, we learned how to use the NHD website using NHD YouTube tutorials. We made sure to organize our information and pictures in a way that was easy to understand. Finally, we added quotes and audio to further relate our topic to the theme.

We used our thesis to further explain the Radium Girls' significance in history. "In the 1920s, a group of young girls were hired to work in factories across the United States to paint clocks with radium paint. However, by the late 1920s, the Radium Girls, as they are known

today, filed a lawsuit against the U.S. Radium Corporation as over 50 women had fallen ill and many died horrifically due to radium poisoning. The lawsuit led to a major turning point in the handling of radium, in addition to creating more labor laws, including the passing of OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Act) in 1970.”

Our topic is historically significant in how it changed the way that scientists handle radioactive material. Before the Radium Girls, radium was put in many products, without anyone realizing its dangerous qualities. Also, multiple labor laws were passed, including OSHA, preventing what happened to the Radium Girls from happening again. Overall, the Radium Girls are a significant part in the way that they inspired many people across the nation, being one of the first groups to win a lawsuit against a major company as the U.S. Radium Corporation. The Radium Girls turned the formerly known miracle cure of radium into something now known as a deadly element.