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The Directing of Melanie Marnich's These Shining Lives

Kristin Fox

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THE DIRECTING OF MELANIE MARNICH'S

THESE SHINING LIVES

by

KRISTIN N. FOX

A THESIS SUBMITTED

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT

OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

MASTER OF FINE ARTS

IN

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The Directing of Melanie Marnich's *These Shining Lives*

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This thesis has been examined and approved by the following members of the student's committee.

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ABSTRACT

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This thesis is submitted in partial fulfillment of Master of the Fine Arts degree in theatre. It is a detailed account of author Kristin N. Fox's directorial process in directing the play *These Shining Lives* in the fall of 2017. This thesis chronicles the director's process from pre-production through performance in five chapters: a pre-production analysis, a historical and critical perspective, a rehearsal and performance journal, a post-production analysis and a process development analysis. Appendices and works cited are included.

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CHAPTER I

EARLY PRODUCTION ANALYSIS

This chapter contains the early production analysis of *These Shining Lives*, which opens on November 14 and runs through November 18, 2017, in the Andreas Theatre on the Minnesota State University, Mankato campus. It is the director's intent to use this chapter to delve into a brief character analysis of each character within the play as well as touch on all major elements of design and her expectations and main concept for the production.

These Shining Lives could best be categorized as a drama. It is the creative re-telling of a tragic event that actually occurred in the United States of America. The play features characters that are based on real people. And a real place, Ottawa, IL, where people can still go today to visit a museum and memorial dedicated to the characters within this play, the radium girls. *These Shining Lives* is narrated by the character of Catherine Donohue, one of the radium girls, who shares with the audience glimpses into the private lives of these historic women before stepping into a scene which illustrates what happened to the women of the Radium Dial company from 1922 to 1938.

This is a play about people and time. It is a story about how time gets away from a person and how in a moment our lives can change forever. It is also a story about a workforce built on the lives of thousands of women. These are important

women who went unnoted in our history books and classrooms and who deserve attention and recognition for the injustices they endured.

The director's concept of this play is that all of the characters are cogs within an old watch and just as watches of old had to be wound back to keep moving forward, so too are these characters forced to be wound back to the beginning of their story in hopes that someday in the future there will be change. This concept is based on things that can be found in the script. The character of Catherine Donohue switches back and forth between self-reflective direct storytelling and interaction with the other characters on stage. She manages to speak of things in the present and past tenses, giving the illusion that this performance is not the first time she has told her story. In fact, the director found that when discussing the plot with interested parties, she also had to "rewind" to the beginning each time to tell people the story of what happened to these radium girls and their "shining lives" that ended in such misery and death.

Each character plays an important role in the retelling of this story but since there are many characters within the play, the director has chosen to focus on the six main characters that are the most pivotal to the plot of the play. Catherine Donohue is the heroine of the play. She is young and beautiful; we know these two things to be true because it is remarked upon many times throughout the play by other characters. Although Catherine eventually does end up leading the other women in their lawsuit against the Radium Dial Company, she isn't an aggressive person. Within the confines of the script, she is quiet and reserved. She is a loving mother, wife and kind friend who

uplifts the others around her. In her interactions with other characters she listens more than she speaks, but when she has something to say she can speak volumes in a handful of words. When she directly addresses the audience, she is honest, fearless and able to give the audience the facts without being bogged down by the heaviness of emotions. This is not to say that she is without emotion; on the contrary, the audience is able to see her emotions get the better of her when she tries, in vain, to master time by smashing all the clocks in her home in an effort to protect her children from its effects.

Finding her efforts to be futile she erupts in a tearful rage that leaves her emotionally drained crying out “this is the sound of a mother’s heart breaking” (Marnich 50). Catherine feels everything but she does so with strength, grace and undying determination.

Catherine’s husband, Tom Donohue, is her truest and most reliable companion. He is a hardworking man of steel and sky scrapers. He is a veteran of “the war” and although he never says outright where he was fighting, it can be assumed that he fought in World War I and spent his time in the trenches. With this knowledge, one is able to more greatly understand his speech to Mr. Reed towards the end of the play:

I saw things that no human being should ever have to see . . . and after it, I couldn’t believe in anything good. But when I first saw Katie, the first thing, the only thing I thought when I saw her face was that there had to be a God, because he made her. . .talk about a miracle. (64)

It is in this speech that we really see Tom as a once broken man, made anew by his love for Catherine only to be brought low again at the loss of her to the radium poisoning.

Frances is one of the three women that Catherine meets and befriends at the Radium Dial Company. The other characters within the play refer to Frances as the “moral backbone” of the group, though we learn from Catherine that Frances has the most “flexible” backbone you’ve ever seen. Frances seems to be the moral compass for the group but she is easily swayed by the prospect of a juicy tidbit of gossip, and though she tries to act above it all, she always slips into the trap of good gossip and finds herself eating up every morsel of information the other girls have to offer. Although she can at times be firm, she is always kind and is tempered with a sweetness that endears her to Catherine as well as to the audience. Frances is the most modest of the four women. While at the beach in Act I, scene viii she is scandalized by women “showing a bit of leg and a lot of chest” (30) only to find herself being good naturedly teased by the other women. She has a sister, who also works at Radium Dial, who we hear briefly about in Act II, scene xvi. Frances often acts as a moderator between Catherine and Charlotte Purcell, diffusing conversations before they become fights. Of all of the women in the group, she is the one who least wants to go to court against Radium Dial. She ultimately does so in solidarity with her friends.

Pearl Payne is the jokester within the team of Radium Dial workers. She tells terrible jokes and is always quick to turn on the radio or make a funny remark to lighten the mood. Although these attributes endear her to the audience, as the play progresses

Pearl uses the shield of comedy to protect herself from feeling too much sorrow. Even in the depths of her pain, as the radium is eating away at her body and slowly killing all of her friends, she tells jokes and encourages laughter. Pearl is the youngest of the group and she is an excellent listener. She often prompts the other characters to keep talking by saying things like “what’s that, honey?” (55) and then remaining actively interested in whatever the other character has to say.

Charlotte Purcell is the “star painter” of the Radium Dial company. The first time we meet her she is regaling the other two girls with a story about how much she loves to “smoke, drink gin and shimmy” (14). The director’s first impression of Charlotte is that of an independent woman in a time when women were still expected to settle down and find themselves a husband. She is fiercely loyal to her friends and secretly soft-hearted and kind, although she keeps up a façade of being edgy and tough. She is cool and indifferent towards Catherine for the first few scenes that they share together but warms up to her in time, eventually becoming Catherine’s strongest ally in the fight against radium dial. Charlotte is a single woman, who lives with and cares for her aging mother who we hear about a few times throughout the play.

Mr. Rufus Reed is the head of the floor production at the Radium Dial company. He is smart, charming and kind and at first seems to be an honorable man. He jokes with the women at the table while they work and is encouraging, often singing their praises as being a good joke teller or being the best painter on the production floor. The women trust him until in Act II, scene xii when he betrays that trust by bringing the

women a letter from the owner of the company and telling them that they have nothing to worry about because Radium Dial has their best interests in mind. Mr. Reed is a pawn for the company, looking out for himself and not the women he is supposed to supervise and protect. In his confrontation with Mr. Donahue after the trial in Act II, scene xix we learn that he was also lied to by the Radium Dial company, but, as Mr. Donohue says, “at a certain point you knew” (63). Mr. Reed doesn’t know how to answer Mr. Donohue but he also doesn’t walk away when Mr. Donohue begins to tell him about Katie. Instead, Mr. Reed listens intently. In this scene Rufus Reed begins to show the slightest bit of redemption as he recognizes how his actions have affected the lives of these women. Mr. Reed is able to acknowledge that he, perhaps, does deserve to die for his crimes but instead he must live with the knowledge that he was a coward when faced with doing what was right and what was easy.

The play is set in Ottawa, IL, starting in 1922 and contains events that occur up to 1938. There are many locations throughout the play, the director does not think it necessary to have multiple settings. She prefers the suggestion of various spaces that can quickly and easily transform from one location to another through the use of staging, lights and props. Scenic elements should allow for multiple levels and give the audience a sense of motion and of unease when looking at the set. The director is hoping for some scenic elements that will be multi-purpose, e.g., a table that can transform into a bed for ease of transitions and to convey the sparsity of the era.

The set should assist in conveying the director's concept, focusing on the idea that all of the characters are cogs within a watch. Located somewhere on the set will need to be a surface for the projections that are listed throughout the script. The director will include photos of the various women from the radium trials, specifically in the final scene of the play when the four characters are speaking the names of the other women who worked in the factories with them.

Costumes should be simplistic. Each of the actors should only have one complete costume that represents them as their main character. All the other additional characters such as reporters, judges, doctors and lawyers should be indicated by additions like coats or hats that are put on over the existing costumes for efficiency in character changes. The women's costumes should be colorful and each woman should have a color that best compliments both the actress and the character they are portraying. Since the director plans to leave the four female actors on stage at all times, it is important that their costumes are complimentary to each other to provide pops of color to the scenic elements.

Props are very important within this production. The director is currently toying with the idea that everything be done as "blank props," which would mean that the prop would be the right shape, size and weight but instead of being realistic it would be painted all black or some other neutral tone. The reasoning behind these blank props circles back to the concept of the play. The blank props are meant to give the illusion that the story is being retold. When stories are told over and over they begin to lose

some of the details because they get further away from the actual moments in our lives. So, although the characters in the play may remember having had a picnic basket at the beach, they perhaps don't remember the exact color of the picnic basket. These blank props will create memory placeholders for the characters to use in their scenes.

The music for this play should reflect the popular music from 1922-1938. Pearl often plays the radio at work and the music that is piped through the radio on her desk should illustrate the era of jazz while not distracting from the dialogue on stage. The first act should be filled with sounds of life. When the women go to the beach there should be the sound of waves, gulls and the distant sound of children playing but when we get to the end of the act and the horror of the effects of radium are revealed all sounds of life should cease and only the sound of the ticking of a clock should continue to help signify that the countdown has begun. The director has been considering the idea of there being a clock ticking in the background of all Act II scenes and that the volume would change depending on when important moments are happening on stage.

Lights will play a vital role in the act of telling this story. They will help to guide the audience through the play and quickly shift focus within scenes. There are multiple moments where one scene is occurring and a character in a different location steps on stage to share information. An example of this can be seen in Act I, scene iii when Mr. Reed and the women are in the factory talking about the benefits of radium and Dr. Rowntree steps on stage to tell the audience about the "value of radium is unquestionably established . . ." (16). Lights will be used in moments like these to give

and take focus within the scene. The director is planning to establish with the lighting designer a set of lighting specials in various areas of the stage that can be used as blocking points that actors can be directed to stand on to get a tight circle of light on them. She is hoping to use these specials many times during the performance in hopes that by establishing them early in the process with the designer and then utilizing them as much as possible in the blocking rehearsal it will make for an easier time during the week of technical rehearsals.

Overall, the director is very excited to begin work on this production. She believes that this play tells an important story about a very important group of women who, up until 2008, had gone without representation in the theatrical world. It is the director's hope that by sharing this play with the greater Mankato area she will be able to bring these women's stories to the forefront for a new generation of people.

CHAPTER II

RESEARCH

These Shining Lives first premiered at the Baltimore Center Stage on April 30, 2008 (NewDramatist.org). The play was a “finalist for the Susan Smith Blackburn Prize and the Weissberger Award” (NewDramatist.org) and has received critical acclaim for various performances since its publication. Playwright Melanie Marnich, is also known for her works *Blur*, *TallGrass Gothic* and *Quake*. The latter two have “premiered at Actors Theatre of Louisville’s Humana Festival of New American Plays” (NewDramatist.org). Marnich is “a core Member of The Playwrights’ Center and a writer on the Showtime series, *The Big C*” (New Dramatist.org).

In order to provide proper historical representation and research of the events that take place within the production of *These Shining Lives*, the author must first go back to the beginning and the initial discovery of radium and the craze that followed it.

Radium was first discovered in 1898 by Marie and Pierre Curie. It was an incredibly difficult element to extract, and at the time of its discovery, the Curies were only able to purify a small amount of the substance with which to conduct their experiments. Marie Curie called it “my beautiful radium” (Moore XV) and it was said to glow with an otherworldly greenish hue, casting its glow out even in the darkest of rooms. However, when it was found that pure radium would eat away at cancerous

tumors and kill the cancer, the world began to wonder what other medical wonders radium might be hiding. It would not be until 1909, when Joseph and James Flannery would go to Europe to see this miraculous “wonder drug” in person, that radium would begin its long and deadly journey into the lives of Americans (Suppan 2).

By the early part of the 1910s, radium products were cropping up all over the United States. In 1910 a single gram of radium would be worth \$120,000 (a modern equivalent to \$2.2 million) (Moore 4), and companies of all kinds were scrambling to create the latest and greatest product for the radium craze.

It was a craze, no other word for it. The element was dubbed “liquid sunshine” . . . on sale were radium jockstraps and lingerie, radium butter, radium milk, radium toothpaste (guaranteeing a bright smile with every brushing) and even a range of Radior cosmetics which offered radium laced face creams, soap, rouge and compact powders. (6)

In short, radium was everywhere and having access to the luxury radium products was a sign of wealth and prosperity within 1910’s society.

It even made its way to Broadway in a musical called *Piff! Paff! Pouf!* which featured a song called the “Radium Dance,” described by the Evening World News as a performance in which: “The stage is darkened, and a phosphorescent light thrown on the dancers” who then used phosphorescent rope to skip around the stage in a glowing, choreographed frenzy.

The luminous abilities of radium captured the attention of the US Military and an order was made for the Radium Luminous Materials Corporation in Newark, NJ, to begin production on pocket watches painted with the luminous radium infused substance called "Undark" which would be distributed to the troops in to trenches of Europe during the first World War. Undark was created by Sabin vonSochocky in 1913 was made by,

. . .dabbing a little radium powder into a small white crucible and adding a dash of water and gum Arabic adhesive: a combination that created a greenish-white luminous paint. . . the fine yellow powder contained only a minuscule amount of radium; it was mixed with zinc sulfide, with which the radium reacted to give a brilliant glow. (Moore 5)

This paint would then be used to paint watch faces but also any number of military dials and instrument panels needed for ships and other heavy machinery making their way across the seas and into battle.

The women who worked in the factories considered their work part of the war effort. They believed that by creating precisely made pocket watches they were helping the soldiers in their own way. It wasn't uncommon for a woman to scratch her name and address onto the back of a pocket or wrist watch as a message to the soldier who would eventually receive it. Sometimes in return the soldier would send a letter. The factories were also a place for young women to meet and socialize with other women.

According to Kate Moore's book, The Radium Girls, the average dial painter started around the age of 15 and most of the women would have no more than the equivalent of a third-grade education. They were the daughters of immigrants and lower-middle class merchants. Typically, unmarried and often working to help supplement the family income, the women were eager to make friends and carve out a place for themselves in the working world. As far as factory jobs went, the dial painters were paid exceptionally good wages

. . . at an average rate of 1.5 cents a watch . . . some earned more than three times the average factory-floor worker . . . they were ranked in the top 5 percent of female wage-earners and took home \$20 (\$370) a week, though the fastest painter could easily earn more, sometimes as much as an annual salary of \$2,080 (almost \$40,000). The girls lucky enough to gain a position felt blessed. (Moore 9)

It was no wonder when the Radium Dial company opened in Ottawa, IL, in 1922, that every young woman in town was hoping to gain employment with such a fashionable and lucrative company. Because the work the women were doing required them to paint spaces sometimes no larger than a millimeter, the women had to find ways to make their brush tips as fine as possible.

The act of making the fine point on their brushes was called lip pointing. "They put the brush to their lips . . . dipped it in the radium . . . and painted the dials" (13). This "lip, dip, paint" routine was repeated over and over again by the women as they

worked and chatted and dreamed about all the money they would be making with each dial they completed. Questions were raised by the women at Radium Dial, as it had been at every dial factory, about if the Undark material was safe for consumption. The answer was always the same, "Yes," and that the worker "didn't need to be afraid. After all, radium was the wonder drug; the women, if anything, should benefit from their exposure" (8). However, by 1922, when Radium Dial opened its doors in Ottawa, IL, women in Newark, NJ, had already started to suffer and die from strange ailments that the company doctors would not diagnose and that baffled doctors outside of the company.

Doctors who treated women who had worked at the dial factories diagnosed them with everything from various sexually transmitted diseases specifically syphilis to phosphorous poisoning. Phosphorous poisoning was suspected because a mere 20 years prior in London, women who worked in matchstick factories were dying from exposure to the phosphorous that was used in the making of matches. Since the exact chemical make-up of the Undark material was not known to the greater public, deputy commissioner of the Department of Labor, John Roach, led a full-fledged investigation against the dial company in Newark, NJ, demanding that they release a sample of the Undark material to be tested by outside sources for phosphorous. The company obliged and tests were run that did eventually prove that the Undark material did not contain any phosphorous. It was concluded by the deputy commissioner that the Undark was not the cause of the women's ailments.

It would not be for almost another 10 years before doctors would come forward and say that the mysterious diseases and cancers riddling the bodies of Radium Dial and Radium Luminous Materials Corporation workers were indeed caused by radium poisoning. A massive lawsuit then followed these findings lead by Catherine Wolfe Donohue.

Catherine Wolfe Donohue was born February 4, 1903, in Ottawa, IL. She suffered many hardships in her early years. Losing both her parents before the age of 10, she was raised by her aunt and uncle. She was nineteen when she went to work at the Radium Dial company in 1922. She would be one of the more educated women to work at the Radium Dial company, having completed both grade school and high school before starting to work. Later on, she would remark that “It was fascinating work, and the pay was good, . . . but every line had to be just so” (42). She would go on to marry Tom Donohue on January 23, 1932, ten years after she started her work at the Radium Dial company. They would have two children together, Tommy and Mary Jane. Her real-life story varies from the play in many ways, primarily the timeline of when she was married and when she started working at the factory.

Charlotte Nevins Purcell was born January 27, 1906, to Patrick and Matilda Nevins. She was raised in Ottawa, IL, and began work at the Radium Dial company in 1922. She worked at the factory for 13 months before leaving to become a seamstress. She married Albert Purcell April 12, 1928, and they had three children together. Her family and close friends said that Charlotte was “outspoken, she told people what she

thought about things” and she would go on to be dubbed a “spokeswoman for the other women” (Moore web) of the radium trials. Her story varies from *These Shining Lives* in that she is not married in the play and she stayed working at the factory the longest out of all of the women.

Frances Glacinski O’Connell was born in 1907, and along with her sister, Marguerite, went to work at the Radium Dial factory in 1922. She was married to John O’Connell and they had four children together. They lived in her childhood home along with her sister to help care for their elderly mother. There is not much known about Frances as she and her sister were the least involved of all of the women in the lawsuit. Frances’s real life varies from the play in many ways but most prominently is her real life lack of involvement in the lawsuit, although we see hints of this in her character in the play.

Pearl Payne was born March 8, 1900. Pearl was the daughter of Polish and German immigrants and next to Catherine, she was the most educated of the women within the play having completed the 6th grade before having to leave school and go to work at the factory. She married Hobart Payne and they had one daughter together. Pearl was extremely close to Catherine and they wrote letters back and forth to each other which have been preserved. If one were to read these letters they would find a fierce and loving friendship. Pearl was heavily involved in the lawsuit and “helped to create a society to help other workers afflicted by occupational hazards” (Moore web) calling it the Society of the Living Dead. The group was sensationalized by the

newspapers at the time the lawsuit went to court and made the women a national headline. However, through Pearl's work with the Society of the Living Dead alongside Leonard Grossman, the attorney who represented the women in their lawsuit, they were able to jumpstart a "greater effort of humanitarian idealism" (Moore web) which would eventually change the laws surrounding health and safety reform in the United States of America.

The lawsuit made by what the newspapers were calling "Ottawa's Living Dead" (Clark 191) would be started in 1935 by a woman named, Inez Vallet, another dial painter from the factory and would eventually be passed on to Catherine Donohue and the other women of *These Shining Lives*. The Occupational Diseases Act of 1911 helped give the radium girls a foot in the door of the courts by creating a platform from which they could sue in regards to the company blatantly lying to them about the safety and proper use of radium in the work place. The Radium Dial company would appeal six times before April of 1938 when the Industrial Commission would step in and settle the lawsuit in the court of law granting Catherine and the other women their compensations for medical expenses and an annual pension for the future. Catherine died in July, only a few months after her victory; "one day after her (Catherine's) death Radium Dial filed an appeal for her award" (Clark 191). The case would stay in the courts until the fall of 1939 when the U.S. Supreme Court would throw it out, requiring the Radium Dial company to pay the \$5,700 it owed to the Donohue family.

In Claudia Clark's book Radium Girls: Women and Industrial Health Reform 1910-1935, one may read all about the complicated laws that allowed companies like the Radium Dial company to continue to get away with unsafe practices in the workplace. But it is also possible to see the impact that these shining women had on the courts and the many ways that they helped to spur changes in the safety laws of the United States. Because of cases like Catherine Donohue's the United States government began taking a bigger role in the regulation of radium and how it was to be handled. Studies were done to help figure out how much radium exposure was dangerous and how to best work with radium on a daily basis. It wouldn't be until the 1970s when safety regulations would really fall in to place causing deaths by radium poisoning to drop to less than 5% in the American workplace. One can trace these changes in laws back to the lawsuits that started it all and the women who stood up for change in the face of adversity.

CHAPTER III

JOURNALS

May 11, 2017

Today we arrived in Ottawa, IL; the real-life location of *These Shining Lives*. Our arrival was early in the morning, just a little before 8:00 AM. The city was quiet, a few school buses lumbered past us on the main street and cars filled the parking lots of local businesses where people had already clocked in to begin their busy days. Nestled in downtown Ottawa there is a memorial to the women of the Radium Dial company on the corner of Clinton and Jefferson Street. It is small, only about 10 feet wide, with a statue of a Radium Girl in the center. She holds a paintbrush in one hand and a wilted tulip in the other. Her face is full of concern and a touch of sorrow. At her feet, she is standing on the face of clock. She is flanked by informational signs where one may read about the brave women who took on the Radium Dial company.

While I read these signs, I was approached by an older woman who asked if I was Kate Moore, the author of the new book, [The Radium Girls](#). I told her I was not but I had come to this place because of *These Shining Lives*. The woman took a seat beside me on the bench and proceeded to tell me the story of her mother, who was a worker at the Radium Dial company. She told me that her mother died, as did her aunt and her oldest sister, from radium poisoning. She said that when the women would come home at

night, they were bringing the radium dust into their homes and “that dust got everywhere,” which meant that it was getting into the meals that they were serving to their families and into their baby’s bottles. Her story made me realize that the radium poisoning reached so much further than just the women who worked in the factories; it affected their family’s health as well.

September 11, 2017

Today we had our first production meeting; my team includes Nat Vorel: costume designer; John Hocker: lighting designer; Jared Shofstall: technical director; Reegan Tolk: props master; Tasha Singh: stage manager; and Dalen O’Connell: scenic designer. O’Connell missed the first meeting but has arranged to meet with me later in the week to talk about the concept and about him potentially handling the creation of the projection slides that will be used throughout the production.

I explained that the concept of this play is that all of the characters are cogs within an old watch and just as watches of old had to be wound back to keep moving forward, so too are these characters forced to be wound back to the beginning of their story in hopes that someday in the future there will be change. I talked about how the play has the feel of being an old memory and that certain things will stand out to us, like the colors of the women’s dresses and the handle of the brushes they hold while painting the watch faces, but then other things, like the cards they play with in the

kitchen, are just placeholders, blank and empty, meant to signify the action but not the actual thing.

September 18, 2017

We had auditions tonight. I love audition night! I love seeing all the potential that the actors bring into the room. I love the excitement they have when performing their monologues. I made a list of four sets of women that I would be calling back. I gave a few of the female auditionees a call back even though I knew there was very little chance that I would be able to cast them. This was because Heather Hamilton was also casting that night for *Diary of Anne Frank* and *1984*.

I was particularly impressed with Ashley Ziegler and Trevor Belt's callback tonight for Catherine and Tom Donohue. Ziegler and Belt had instant chemistry that I knew would work beautifully on stage. I cast Sam Fairchild as Pearl Payne. I have had the pleasure of working with Fairchild a number of times and I knew she would be able to bring the playful sweetness and depth that is needed for the role of Pearl. Sarah Thomas was cast as Frances O'Connell. In the callback Thomas brought a poised and likeable character into the room as Frances. I was impressed with how quickly she took direction in the scene and I am confident that she will be an excellent Frances O'Connell. I cast Zoe Hartigan as Charlotte Purcell. Hartigan had the opportunity to play this exact role in a cutting of *These Shining Lives* that I did in the spring of 2017 for a directing class. She was brilliant then and was just as brilliant tonight at callbacks. Hartigan is

able to grasp the fierceness of Charlotte Purcell. I strongly believe she will bring life to this character in a fascinating way. I finished out casting with Gabriel Sell as Mr. Rufus Reed. I was slightly surprised to see Sell in my auditions tonight as he has, of late, been primarily a musical theatre performer and I thought perhaps he would be burned out from a busy first half of the semester. But I was glad to see him because he is a smart actor with a knack for taking direction and understanding the subtext of a script. I was able to cast him in the role of Mr. Rufus Reed. I am pleased overall with the casting of this show and am exceptionally excited to get into rehearsals and see what everyone brings to the table.

October 16, 2017

Tonight was our first rehearsal for *These Shining Lives*. Due to *Ragtime* holding auditions this evening as well, I decided to start rehearsal a little later than usual to allow for cast members to attend the auditions. We started the rehearsal with Nat Vorel presenting his costume designs to the cast. I had to prompt him a few times to talk about different aspects of the costumes by asking him to discuss the various textures and colors that will be used. I also encouraged him to talk about hairstyles and facial hair for the men. I felt that he was underprepared for coming to rehearsal this evening because it required so much prompting to get any information out of him about the costumes.

I then spent about thirty minutes talking briefly about the historical context of the play, touching on the radium craze, the first world war, the need for glow-in-dark watches and instrument panels and women in the work place in the 1920s and 30s. I gave annotated versions of each character's historical background but gave the actors the assignment of coming back tomorrow with more information about their characters. I asked them to focus on their character's families. For the female actors I also asked them to do additional research on what it meant to be a woman working at this time. We then proceeded to do a read through of the play. It sounds amazing. There was a palpable excitement in the room as we got to the final scene of the play. I can tell that the actors are eager to give these characters life.

October 17, 2017

At table work tonight I asked the actors to present what pieces of history they were able to find about their characters. I also brought all of my research books and laid them out on the table for the actors to peruse while we chatted. Hartigan was struggling with finding information on Charlotte, so I gave her a few websites to look at and showed her some excerpts from the book [The Radium Girls](#) by Kate Moore. I explained to the cast that Moore's book had been my greatest resource in this process as she did all the legwork that I would have had to do. I talked about how Moore had been directing a production of *These Shining Lives* and was appalled at the lack of information on the stories of these women. So she started on a journey to dig up their

tales. She did hundreds of interviews, combed through years and years of newspaper articles and finally compiled her book which was extremely useful in the writing of my chapter two and in learning information about these women. We then spent the second half of rehearsal reading through the play again and talking about each scene. Actors were given time to ask questions about socio-economic issues, women's rights vs men's rights and what was happening in the rest of the world. We talked more in-depth about World War I and the impact a major war has on a country. We discussed the Great Depression since it began in the middle of this play and was in full swing by the time the women started losing their jobs. In one particular scene, when I asked Sell what he thought Reed was saying, he gave a surface level answer, claiming that Mr. Reed is just a nice guy who wants to make everyone happy. However, I disagreed with his analysis of Mr. Reed, we discussed how, within the play, some signs show us that Reed is a passive bystander who allows big business to get away with doing terrible things to these women. He might still be a kind and generous man, but at the end of the day, Rufus Reed is a weak man who must come to terms with the terrible things he allowed to happen under his supervision.

October 18, 2017

There are performances of *The Aeneid* for the rest of this week. Since three of the actors are in the show and my remaining three only have one scene with each other, I have cancelled rehearsals for the rest of the week and we will resume on Sunday.

October 23, 2017

Tonight's rehearsal was just the four women, rehearsing in room 113 because of a private event occurring in the theatre space. We started rehearsal by rough blocking all of the scenes in the first act with just the women, specifically we blocked the scenes where the women go to the beach and a couple of their scenes at the factory. The beach scene is the one I wanted to focus on tonight. The actors and I talked about how these four women must have felt going to the beach, some of them for the first time in years. When we ran the scene, I set it up by talking about the wind, the sun and the water. I asked the actors to close their eyes and think about what it is like to sit on the shore of a big body of water and to experience all of those sights, sounds and sensations. I wanted the actors to be able to pull from their memories times they spent by the water, in the warm summer sunshine, because I wanted those memories to fuel their expressions and their emotions during this scene. I want the audience, when they watch the beach scene, to yearn for summer too and the chance to escape for the weekend to the lake.

In the second half of rehearsal tonight, we worked the poker scene with the women, which was when I discovered that some of the girls had never played poker before. I asked Tasha Singh, my stage manager, run down to my office and bring back a deck of cards and I taught the actors how to play poker. While we played, we talked more about the history of these women's stories and I asked the actors questions about relationships with each other. I asked them playful questions like favorite hobby or

favorite food of their characters as well as serious things, like what does their character fear the most about dying? What is at stake for them? Who do they leave behind? After playing poker for a bit, we ran the scene again, and the chemistry was fantastic. All the actors agreed afterward that they had a better grasp of the stakes for this scene and it also made it easier for them to understand how to handle the cards now that they had had a chance to play an actual game of poker.

October 24, 2017

Tonight, we rehearsed with just Trevor Belt and Ashely Zeigler for the first time and spent a major portion of the evening building trust within their relationship. We talked about boundaries and how my goal was to craft a relationship that was passionate and loving, but that I did not want to do that at the expense of either of their comfort levels. I talked about how we can see throughout the text the amount of love and respect that Katie and Tom have for each other and how important it was to stay as true to that love as possible. Both Zeigler and Belt were receptive about the level of intimacy that the relationship called for, so I hope to create intimate moments of love between these two characters without needing words. We then spent a portion of the evening just discussing and working out different idiosyncrasies that these two might have as a couple. Things that were included were the way they might hold hands, how they might hold each other when kissing (where do their hands instinctively go), in what way do they show each other comfort (e.g., forehead or cheek kisses, shoulder

massages, etc). We continued in this manner for a while before taking a quick break and then launching into the blocking of their scenes together during the first act. I am excited to see how the layers of affection that we crafted tonight can make their way into other moments within the play.

October 26, 2017

We finished blocking the show tonight by about 7:45 PM and were able to take a 5-minute break before running through Act I. The actors appreciated getting to see how the scenes flow into one another. Currently, I have the female actors on the physical stage at all times. They have a home base area, spread out evenly upstage underneath where the clock will eventually hang. The idea is that these women are trapped on the clock face. They each have an in-character neutral pose that starts out confident and cheerful and becomes more pained and sickly looking as the play progresses. The male actors flank the stage on either side, just off the platforming in the upstage right and left corners. They are meant to act as visual “guards” creating an illusion that the women can never leave the stage because they are kept there by their male counterparts. I was pleased we were able to get through all of Act I before the end of rehearsal tonight as it puts us ahead of schedule for next week.

October 31, 2017

We managed to do a full stumble through tonight as we are still ahead of schedule. It was good to see the show in its entirety on stage. Before we started the stumble through we talked about how to figure out all the transitions and how to best get from point A to point B. I addressed some concerns with O'Connell before rehearsal started about the length of the work table, since it was shorter than we had expected and he informed me that it had been built incorrectly and would be fixed by the end of the week, this will add almost an extra two feet to the end of the table. We also discussed my concerns about some sight line issues on the house left side with the height of the platform and the scenes in Mr. Reed's office and Doctor Dalitsch's office, which both take place downstage right. O'Connell and I came to the conclusion that he would eliminate the facing that was meant to go on that side of the stage, thus fixing the sight line issue.

November 5, 2017

Tonight, during our full run of the show, Lighting Designer John Hocker and Sound Designer Alex Rollins, wanted to do test runs of their designs to get some initial feedback. The problem that arose was the sheer number of errors that I saw in the lighting design. There were entire scenes where the actors were standing either in complete shadow or in which lights would be up on random places on stage. At

intermission Hocker asked for my opinion and when I told him there was still a lot of work to do he sighed heavily at me and rolled his eyes.

At the end of the rehearsal, Hocker and I talked through the final look of the play. He had most of the characters in darkness and there was only a single star gobo in use, which was being cast upon the face of clock. I explained that each actor should be in their own special, as I have blocked them on the pre-decided specials we talked about back at the beginning of the process. I also asked for there to be a wash of stars on the curtains but not on the clock when Ziegler says her line “the stars came out” and then for the lights to come up on the clock face when she says “the moon came out.” Hocker reminded me that he had hung three moon gobos and asked if I wanted to use one of those. This was a conversation that we had previously in a production meeting, where I distinctly said that I did not want a moon gobo for that moment, so I was frustrated that he continued to insist on the gobo. Hocker has an extremely bad habit of interrupting me when I speak. It reminds me of the way old men talk to little girls. It makes me feel like he isn’t actually listening to what I’m saying and is instead just waiting for me to stop talking so that he can say his piece. He becomes impatient with waiting and interrupts me instead. It gets in the way of my being able to give him feedback and it becomes apparent that he doesn’t take me seriously. I let it slide tonight because I was tired but I won’t be standing for it anymore. I find myself internally thinking, if I was Paul Hustoles, chair of the theatre department, directing a show, would a designer be

constantly interrupting me? My answer is no, they would not. I believe that I deserve the same respect.

November 7, 2017

We had our publicity photo call tonight. I was excited to see all of the women in their costumes but was disappointed to discover that Zoe Hartigan's costume is not at all what we agreed on in the original designs. The original design was a green fitted dress that showed the confidence and style of Charlotte Purcell. Instead, Hartigan's dress was a dark grey sheath dress with a pale green, chunky knit sweater over it. The costume made her look frumpy and the color of the dress was the exact same color of the stage.

I expressed my concerns to Vorel as soon as the photo call was finished. I talked about how this wasn't the agreed upon design and how it doesn't fit Hartigan's character at all. We need to see the flare and the beauty of Charlotte. Charlotte is a daring character; she goes to the speakeasy; she smokes and dances because it makes her feel good; she spends her money on gloves and clothes and expensive things because she can. Vorel tells me that he isn't sure he can find anything else in stock. I tell him that there are things that will work that are closer to the agreed upon design and that he needs to just ask for help from his advisor, David McCarl, or from the costume shop manager, Scott Anderson, as both of them would be happy to help Vorel find a more suitable piece. I also expressed a concern that Sarah Thomas's costume

consisted of a dark, navy blue dress which, although it is the style we agreed upon, was too dark and would cause Thomas to get lost in the dark curtains upstage.

I was discouraged to discover that Sam Fairchild had no fittings prior to tonight's photo call and she had come in not knowing whether or not she actually had a dress. However, the most disappointing thing I learned from the actors, as they came to me with concerns after the photo shoot was done, is that Vorel had been making inappropriate remarks about the actor's weight and size. I had words with Vorel after rehearsal about how inappropriate his words were, and I plan to make it known to his advisor that such things are being said.

This put a hinderance on our rehearsal tonight because the actors were feeling very frustrated with the costume process. I told them I was glad they told me what had happened and I talked briefly about how they need to make sure they tell people when things like this happen because they deserve to be treated with respect and kindness. We spent a few minutes doing a warm-up that involved stretching and shaking out our bodies. But before launching into a run of the show the actors went around and started hugging each other. It was really lovely to watch how their spirits lifted just by sharing a moment of kindness together. The run through went very well after these warm-ups.

I only had a few notes at the end, but the two big changes I made were that I removed Sell and Belt from the sides of the stage and placed them backstage and I reworked a transition. At the end of the card playing scene in Act II, the next scene involved Catherine talking about how she is dying and she is reaching out into the

brightness of the spotlight, like reaching to heaven before realizing that she is afraid to die and begins to call for her husband. In this moment, I used to have Ziegler blocked on the far downstage left platform but now I placed her on the upstage left platform where the table is located. In the moment when she calls for Tom I have blocked it so that she “falls” off the upstage platform into Belt’s arms and, with the eventual transition of lights, we will be able to “discover” them in their bedroom where Tom is holding Catherine. I am certain that once this scene has been a run a few more times and the lights are added, we will be able to make the audience members cry by the time Catherine says “don’t let the children forget about me.”

November 8, 2017

Today I went to David McCarl with my concerns about Hartigan’s dress. I explained to him what I had told Vorel after publicity photos. I explained that Hartigan’s dress was not the agreed upon design, that it was the exact shade of the set and that it did not fit the character. McCarl did seem to share my concerns about changing the dress. He told me the issue was up to the designer to fix. McCarl then told me that it didn’t really matter what the show looked like because I wasn’t being graded on that but rather how I dealt with the situations that arose throughout the process. Although I agree that part of being a good director is the ability to deal with problems, I felt that my coming to him for help was part of dealing with this issue. His response made me feel like my concerns had not been heard. I have made plans to talk to my advisor,

Melissa Rosenberger, tomorrow and seek her advice and authority on this matter. I will not let this slide because it was not the agreed upon design. I understand that changes sometimes have to be made because of budgeting or what is available in stock. But when a costume is so far off from what was originally approved it no longer fits into the world of the play.

We had another run through tonight. The show is coming together nicely. The actors are ready to have more props in hand and are ready to have a fully finished set. We are a few days out from both of these things being accomplished but we are not behind schedule so I am not worried. It has gotten to the fun part of rehearsal when we are able to pause for a moment and go over scenes with a fine-tooth comb finding moments where we can make the characters richer. The actors are comfortable with each other and are extremely intuitive. The women have each crafted their character's way of painting the watches to be unique and interesting to observe. The intimate moments between Catherine and Tom are made richer by the way they steal romantic glances at each other across the table or how they twine their fingers together each time they pass. The scene in Doctor Dalitsch's office in Act II has become one of my favorites as it is heart wrenching to watch how these four women work to hold each other together while they are all simultaneously falling apart.

November 9, 2017

I went to Rosenberger today with the concerns that I brought to McCarl about Hartigan's dress not matching her character or the agreed upon design. I explained how McCarl responded to my concerns. I expressed to her that this production is not simply a grade for me. I have spent the last three months recruiting artistic directors and producers from the Twin Cities to come to see this production. *These Shining Lives* is meant to help launch me back into work in Minneapolis/St Paul. Those who come to see this show with the thought of hiring me aren't going to care about the grade I got or how I handled the issues that arose behind the scenes; they are going to care about the final product. Fortunately, Rosenberger is sympathetic to my concerns and is going to send an email both to McCarl and Vorel so that we can find a resolution to this problem where all parties are happy.

At rehearsal tonight, we had our first night of lighting tech rehearsal. We decided to run the rehearsal as a cue to cue because there are so many lighting cues within this play. Hocker struggled with understanding how each scene should look and continued to interrupt me whenever I had requests or feedback to give. I was thankful that his advisor, Steve Smith, was present during the process as he was able to help streamline some of the issues that arose with programming the lights.

Our main issue was that Hocker did not seem to want to utilize the agreed upon specials and had programmed general washes of light for many of the scenes where I had blocked the performers to stand in a special. Hocker struggled with transitioning to

using the specials and would argue with me about whether or not the actors needed face light, often telling me they could either have a special or face light but not both but through my training in Smith's lighting design class I knew it was possible to have both.

November 10, 2017

There has been no further communication from Vorel in regards to finding a new dress for Hartigan's character. We are now two days away from dress rehearsal and five days from opening night. Because Vorel has ceased responding to emails and has not been available on campus I went to the costume shop today and searched for potential replacement costumes. It was my plan to pull a few options that Vorel and I could look over on Sunday and come to a decision as to which one best fit the character and the design of the show. With the help of Scott Anderson, the costume shop manager, I was able to find five different dresses that would be suitable for Hartigan's character including a beautiful green, vintage wool/cotton blend dress with lovely button details. Also, in my search, I happened upon a light blue cardigan that was in Thomas' size and pulled it to show to Vorel as an option for lightening up her costume.

We used the first half of rehearsal tonight to work through Act II lights. It was very similar to last night and it seemed that Hocker continued to struggle with understanding when to use the specials and when there should be a wash on stage.

Tonight, we also got an opportunity to finally see the projections. O'Connell ran through the slides with myself and Singh, and we talked over some notes I had about

timing between slides and the need for blank slides so that the words can fade away between scenes. It was very exciting to see the slides up on the big clock face center stage. It really feels like the various pieces of the play are finally starting to fall into place.

November 12, 2017

We had our first dress tonight rehearsal. Vorel and I were able to come to a conclusion on Hartigan's dress. The green dress mentioned previously was chosen and the light blue sweater that was pulled for Thomas was added so that her costume would stand out more against the black curtains.

It was exciting to see all of the costumes on stage. After the run, I chatted with Vorel about how all the women needed to have a more polished look to them. I suggested earrings and necklaces and also pointed out that Fairchild's and Thomas's characters were both married women and should have wedding rings. I stressed the importance of a well put together costume because this was a time when people "got ready" to go to work. They did their hair and their nails. They set their make-up just so they could sit at a table in a factory and work.

November 13, 2017

Sound nailed it tonight with the heartbeat/waves sequence at the top of the final scene of the show. The beating of the heart is so powerful that I am certain that

the audience will have a reaction when the beating stops. Also, tonight I finally got to watch the action again, and it is beautiful. There are still a few tweaks to be made; Belt has taken to brandishing silverware at Ziegler during their verbal fight sequence in Act I, scene v and I have given him the note to stop as it looks unnecessarily threatening.

November 14, 2017

Tonight was our soft open and student preview. It was exciting to see so many students filtering into the theatre to watch the performance. There were a few issues with people talking during the performance. There was a moment when Fairchild was trying to tell one of Pearl's knock-knock jokes and a man in the audience kept saying "who's there?" really loudly but the actors were able to roll with the disruption and continue the scene.

November 15, 2017

Opening Night. Great audience. We had lots of alumni in the audience which is comforting and flattering. Their reactions are honest. They laughed when Pearl makes bad jokes, and they wept when Catherine told Tom not to "let the children forget me." In the final moments of the play, everything seemed right, the star gobos came out and washed the stage with light. When curtain call came the audience was on their feet with the coming up of the lights. Afterwards, in the lobby, a man admitted to me that he had never heard this story before. He told me that he was an American History

teacher for over 35 years and he had never heard the story of these women before but he would be going home and doing more research on it now. I am proud of that moment because my main goal in telling this story was to give a voice to the women affected by the Radium Dial company and to give them their proper place in history. It was a long road to get to this point. A lot of tears, a lot of frustration and a LOT of work. But in this moment, tonight, I celebrate the hard work done on this project and the art that was created.

November 16, 2017

I attended the show again tonight and was pleased to see that the house was about half full. The audience tonight had similar reactions to opening night which is good to see. It acts as proof that the moments of comedy were truly well crafted and not simply a familiar audience reacting to their friends on-stage.

We had photo call tonight after the show. I learned earlier in the week that Vorel would be taking the photos. I was disappointed by this because I feared Vorel would lack the knowledge and skills needed to capture the wider shots with the special lighting. I brought my own camera as well because I like to have my own collection of photos for my portfolio use. The photo call ran smoothly. We waited until the end to take pictures with the glow-in-the-dark paint and spent a little time playing with different lighting options. We managed to get a handful of very interesting photos of the women's hands glowing in the darkness of the stage.

November 17, 2017

I attended the show tonight with one of my dearest friends. She is an accomplished actor, comedian and improv performer; I value her opinion very highly. She was deeply moved by the production, in the applause of the curtain call she told me “this show has Kristin Fox all over it” which makes me happy because I couldn’t agree more. *These Shining Lives* is the kind of show that I love to do when I devise theatre drenched in history and done in a manner that never lets us forget that we are telling a story about real people.

At the show tonight, an artistic director I invited from the Twin Cities congratulated me on my work, requested my resume to submit to his board of directors and offered me a slot in their season next year. Another artistic director and friend of mine did the same, told me that we will get lunch over winter break and we will discuss shows I want to do next year should I make my way back to Minneapolis/St Paul. He also sent me a link to a job at a local university and promises to put in a good word for me. Jane Earley, former dean of the College of Arts and Humanities and the namesake of our performing arts building, congratulated me on my work. I am overall thrilled with the art that I have created.

November 18, 2017

Tonight is closing night. I read somewhere once in a book on directing, that a good director will make time before the final show to interact with each actor on a

personal level, whether that means it's a hug or a handshake. The important thing is to give each actor a few moments of my time, to praise their strengths, thank them for their work and to encourage them through to the end of the show. Tonight is different than the shows I have done here in the past; tonight marks a turning point in my academic career at Minnesota State University, Mankato and I could not be prouder of the art that has been created and the creative team that I had the opportunity to work alongside.

CHAPTER IV

POST PRODUCTION ANALYSIS

Within this chapter the author will conduct a brief analysis of her directing process for *These Shining Lives*, which finished its final performance on the Minnesota State University, Mankato's studio stage November 18, 2017. The author will provide insight on her final thoughts of the performances as well as review various staging and theatrical choices she would change or alter if she were to re-stage this performance. The author will also use this chapter to discuss things that she will strive to do differently in their future projects.

These Shining Lives had a successful run without any notable issues as the week progressed. Some of the strongest moments throughout the performances were the transitions between scenes. This was something that the production team and the director took into consideration from the very first production meeting. In reflection the director believes that by keeping the transitions from scene to scene as short and as seamless as possible she was able to maintain the natural rhythm of the production throughout the entirety of the play.

An example of this would be at the beginning of the show. Between scenes ii and iii the only transition that occurred was a shifting of the lights from one side of the stage to the other. This was made possible because the director chose to have the women in scene iii get into their positions and freeze in a moment of action that occurred during scene ii. The moment the women moved into position was timed in such a manner that the actors were brought to life at the mention of “work” and were then frozen in their places by the time the words “career girl” were mentioned. The director chose this moment because it accentuated the act of these three women going to work.

Costumes for this production were satisfactory, although not exactly what the director had hoped for in her initial vision. The issues that arose were with the colors and the cuts for some of the women’s costumes. The director had hoped for rich, vibrant colors for all of the female characters but instead the costumes were muted colors that were dangerously close to vanishing into the black curtains upstage. As it was explained in Chapter III, there were some issues with getting a suitable costume for the character of Charlette Purcell, played by Zoe Hartigan. The dress that was finally decided on, although appropriate in cut and style, was not as bright as had been initially promised. The director would have liked to have Hartigan’s dress be dyed a warm, jade shade of green instead of its pale green color. The director believes that making the color bolder would have helped Hartigan’s dress to stand out more against the color of the aprons that the women wore in their factory scenes. The director also wished that

the character of Frances O'Connell, played by Sarah Thomas, would have had a more brightly colored dress. Thomas' dress was a dark navy blue, which, under the lights, caused her to vanish against the black curtains upstage almost entirely. The cut and the style of the dress was suitable for the character but the color needed more brightness to it so that Thomas did not become a floating head. This was remedied when the director requested that a bright blue cardigan be added for Thomas to wear over her dress. In retrospect, the director would have liked the dress chosen for Ashley Ziegler's character, Catherine Wolfe Donohue, to have matched the other girl's dresses in style more. Ziegler's dress was appropriate for the time and place setting of the play; however, it was the only dress that featured a pattern and its pale purple color set it off from the other characters in a way that created a sense of unbalance.

Sound design was well done within this project and met the director's final vision incredibly well. The director and the sound designer, Alex Rollins, were able to find a common understanding of what the show should sound like and with the exception of a few minor changes that were made during tech week, Rollins was able to present a design that was true to the emotions and the time period of the play.

The lighting design, done by John Hocker, was perhaps the least successful element of this production. Hocker missed the mark when it came to comprehending the director's style and expectations for this production. Even though he attended multiple rehearsals and was given ample information in regards to the director's vision

the final product for lighting design lacked the sharp focused quality the director hope for from the lighting design. There was a struggle throughout the tech rehearsal process to get isolations on the stage for the actors that would include face light, and the director gave the note many times that there needed to be more stars in the final moment of the play when Ziegler's character said "and we were shining." Because of the lack of these two things, the director believes that there was some loss of impact in the visual aspects of the play. Specifically, the final moment of the play could have had a greater impact on the audience by having the entire theatre washed with stars to show the sheer number of women who died from their exposure to radium poisoning.

Scenic design, by Dalen O'Connell, was the most successful of all the elements of the production. O'Connell was able to create a beautiful set modeled after a the workings of an antique radium watch. The platforming used throughout the stage featured smooth curves accented by sharp, pointed gears that peppered the stage. The large clock face that huge over the set was used as both a projection screen and to represent the moon. The scenic design was successful because it helped to convey the director's concept by showing how the women were stuck in time by never being able to leave the watch shaped platforming.

The performances given by the actors were truly superb. The director was very pleased with how all actors handled their roles and the creative aspects they brought to the stage. She is thankful to have been given an opportunity to work with such a

talented cast. There was not a single weak link within the cast, as each actor was able to make their characters unique, interesting and someone the audience could care about. During the rehearsal process the actors were very respectful about the lives of the characters they were representing. Often in a rehearsal, they would bring up a piece of information they had learned either during table work or that they had happened upon in their continued research which would help them to shape their character's choices within the context of the play.

It is the director's belief that overall the performances of *These Shining Lives* were very successful. One of her main objectives going into this process was to give a voice to a group of women in American history who had slipped into the cracks of time where so many women's stories are lost. The director believes that by putting *These Shining Lives* on stage she was able to give the women a voice. Her other goal was to encourage the audience to go home after the performance and do their research and learn about who these women were and what their stories were about, in her Director's Notes in the program she encouraged audience members to ask themselves "Why have I never heard of these women before? Why is their story not one being told in our history classes?" An example that these questions were being asked occurred after the opening night performance: an older man approached the director and told her that he had been an American history professor for 35 years and tonight was the first night he had ever heard of these girls and their story but he was going to go home and start his research to learn about them. Similar conversations were had by the cast with audience

and family members as well as the director over the course of the week of performances.

In conclusion, the director was most pleased with this production of *These Shining Lives* as she believes it managed to achieve its goals of sharing these women's stories, and it provided the audiences with a story of brave women. In the world today, we are hearing more stories about women coming forward and sharing their stories about how they have been wronged by their employers and by people they trusted. *These Shining Lives* shows us that sometimes it just takes the right people standing up and saying "no more" to create a great change in this world. It is the director's hope that plays like *These Shining Lives* will continue to be performed and create an impact in the world of theatre.

CHAPTER V

PROCESS DEVELOPMENT

This chapter will seek to reflect on the skills learned throughout the director's time as a graduate student at Minnesota State University, Mankato. It will provide insight into various classes taken, and the skills learned within said classes as well as provide an analysis of how these skills were applied in the process of directing Melanie Marnich's *These Shining Lives*.

In the fall of 2015, the director took part in Matthew Caron's Theatre Research class. This class was immensely helpful in providing a starting point for navigating the many twists and turns of finding credible research sources for the second chapter of this project. The class also provided the director with a foundation for research in regards to the history of the play and how it applies to the rehearsal process.

In her first round of Advanced Directing Methods, taught by Caron, the director was able to practice and refine her actor coaching skills further through in-class exercises and two rounds of in-class performances. Caron also helped to teach the idea of providing a clear and concise concept for the design team. The director felt more prepared for her production meetings and more capable of being helpful to the actors when they came to her with questions because of Caron's class.

The second time she took Advanced Directing Methods, this time taught by Paul J. Hustoles, the director had the opportunity to direct a cutting of *These Shining Lives* as her first in-class performance project, where she received valuable feedback both from Hustoles and the in-class discussion in regards to the need for such a play to be produced and the overall concept of the play.

In taking Heather Hamilton's Dramaturgy class, the director was able to work on her research skills while learning about the extensive research process that goes into building a dramaturg's binder. Hamilton's Dramaturgy class helped to stress the importance of not necessarily knowing all the answers but being able to know where to look to find the them. The director found this helpful during her process as there would be times when the actors would bring up questions that the director could not answer, but after doing a little research was able to return the next day with answers for the actors. It was also helpful as the director was able to create a binder of information which she carried to rehearsals and had available at table work for the actors to peruse.

Hamilton also taught Theatre History II. On the first day of class she stated the importance of knowing the context of what is happening in the world when we are creating art. This sentiment has stuck with the director throughout the entire process of *These Shining Lives*. Many times throughout the rehearsal process the director used knowledge about what was happening in the world from 1922-1938 to help inform the actors in their choices and motivations. The director has always held history in high regard but hearing Hamilton's take on its importance helped to strengthen the

director's desire to learn as much as she could about the time period in which this play took place.

David McCarl's Design for Directors Costumes class was useful in helping to expand the director's knowledge in working with an inexperienced designer. It also provided the director with an extensive vocabulary in regards to line, silhouette and expectations for the designer. This class helped greatly in communicating with the costume designer for *These Shining Lives*. The director believes that it is because of her new-found knowledge that she was able to better guide the costume designer through the process and when the designer seemed not capable of completing their task, the director felt confident in her abilities to fix the issues regarding costumes being the wrong colors or styles.

The knowledge gained in Steve Smith's Design for Directors Lighting Design class was helpful in discussion with John Hocker, the lighting designer. Since the director took the lighting design class she felt more prepared and knowledgeable when talking to Hocker when it came to things like terminology, and also key words to give as inspiration during the initial concept meeting. She believes that she now has a greater understanding of how to speak to lighting designers because she took Smith's class.

The director has also taken John Paul's Design for Directors Scenic Design I class which she found to be exceedingly helpful when working with Dalen O'Connell, the scenic designer. The director has some working background knowledge in scenic design but she found the class helpful as it allowed her to become familiar with the spaces here

at Minnesota State University, Mankato. It was also in this Scenic Design class that the director had opportunity to participate in discussions and learn important terminology in regards to the many different types of “models” and drawings a scenic designer has to produce in order to properly communicate with both the technical director and the paint charges. The director also learned about how to best speak to scenic designers and what kinds of information they will need in order to be successful in their designs.

In the spring of 2016 the director was able to take Adam Yankow’s Theatre Speech I which she found to be a useful class for this project as some of the actors struggled with being able to relax and fully support their voices. Exercises taught in Adam’s class made their way into the rehearsal process to help promote safe breathing habits and relaxation when rehearsals began to get stressful because of memorization and being in tech week.

In fall of 2016 the director took Paul J. Hustoles’ Acting Techniques which was useful for this project because the director used the idea of different centers (head, heart, stomach or groin) in exercises with the actors during the initial phases of character building. The actors were encouraged to choose different centers for each of their characters to help create solid foundations from which the characters spring forth. This techniques class was also helpful in creating the poses that were used by the four female actors when they were in their character neutrals.

At the time of the production, the director was also in George Grubb’s Design for Directors Sound Design class which she found to be very helpful in her conversations

with her sound designer, Alex Rollins. The director believes that because of Grubb's class she was able to learn the proper vocabulary to use when discussing sound effects and needs with Rollins. She was also thankful to have Grubb's insight throughout the rehearsal and tech process as he was aware of where to find sounds that Rollins was struggling to create.

The director had the opportunity to take Hustoles's Dialects I and II classes in the spring and fall of 2017. Although no dialects were intentionally used within this production, the director did do research into if people from Ottawa, IL, would have an accent. Had she not learned about the minor differences from state to state in Hustoles's class, she would not have realized it was necessary.

In the spring of 2017 the director also took Hustoles's Director/Designer Communication Seminar where she was able to put into practice various communication skills that helped her learn how better to speak to designers. This seminar class puts the student into every role on a design team, so the director had the opportunity to try her hand at theoretical costume, sound, lighting and scenic design which she found to be very informative in regards to how best to communicate ideas to various designers

Also in the spring of 2017 the director took Hamilton's Theory and Criticism class which was a fascinating subject that focused on reading great works and learning about the lives of famous theorists and their impacts on the theatrical world. The director

found this class to be helpful as it opened her eyes, once again, to the impact that a single person can have on the outcome of a country and sometimes the world.

The director also had the opportunity to direct two of other productions in her time at Minnesota State University, Mankato. These productions were *Boy Gets Girl* by Rebecca Gilman and *And Baby Makes Seven* by Paula Vogel. She believes that she was able to grow as an artist through her experiences working on both of these shows as each providing learning opportunities in terms of dealing with designers, problem solving troublesome transitions, and actor coaching.

The director believes that through a combination of the knowledge and experiences that she had prior to beginning classes at Minnesota State University, Mankato combined with the many classes that she has taken during her time in Mankato helped to craft the production of *These Shining Lives* in phenomenal and exciting ways. She is grateful to have been given opportunities to learn and create in this environment.

APPENDIX A

PRODUCTION PHOTOS



Mr. Reed (Gabe Sell) looks on as Pearl (far left, Samantha Fairchild), Catherine (Ashely Ziegler), Charlotte (Zoe Hartigan) and Frances (Sarah Thomas) practice their dialect painting. (Minnesota State University, Mankato Archives)



The dial-painters enjoying some people watching at Lake Michigan on a Saturday afternoon. (Minnesota State University, Mankato Archives)



Catherine tries to comfort Charlotte after learning they have radium poisoning. (Fox)



Tom promises not to let the children forget Catherine when she is dead.

(Minnesota State University, Mankato Archives)



Hartigan and Thomas take on the roles of reporters while Ziegler looks on as Catherine

awaiting trial. (Fox)



The women learn of Frances's sister's impending death.

(Minnesota State University, Mankato Archives)



Sell takes on the role of the Radio Announcer while Thomas, Hartigan and Fairchild become back-up singers in a scene featuring a radio advertisement for Radium Dial watches. (Fox)



Tom and Catherine share a kiss under the clock-face moon. (Fox)

APPENDIX B

RESEARCH IMAGES

PAGE 1 HERALD EXAMINER

Woman Tells How Radium Dooms Her

To Finish Recital if—'She Is Alive'

Collapses as Doctor Prepares to Predict Fatality

By Bruce Grant,
Staff Correspondent of The Herald and Examiner.

OTTAWA, Ill., Feb. 10.—Just as a physician prepared to utter the words which pronounced her doom, Mrs. Catherine Wolfe Donohue, one of Ottawa's living dead, collapsed at the radium-poisoning hearing here today.

Carried from the auditor's room to the courtroom, where Judge George B. Maxwell sat as arbitrator for the Illinois Industrial Commission, Mrs. Donohue, strait-laced woman, was taken to her home.

BEDSIDE HEARING CALLED.

Attorney Leonard J. Grossman of Chicago, who represented her and eleven other women victims of the creeping death from the dread alpha ray, announced that a bedside hearing would be held tomorrow to complete her testimony.

"That is in case she is alive," commented Grossman.

Drama from the start was the hearing, at which the twelve are petitioning the commission under the occupational disease law for compensation for alleged disability caused by radium poisoning contracted while working in the Radium Dial Company here.

DOCTOR HESITATES.

Mrs. Donohue, mother of two small children, had just completed part of her testimony when Dr. Walter William Dailloch of Chicago was summoned to the stand. Grossman demanded of him:

"From your examination of Mrs. Donohue what would you say as to her condition—is it temporary or permanent?" answered Dr. Dailloch.

"In your opinion is it fatal?"

"No—I would prefer not to state in presence of the witness," began the physician.

As he hesitated Mrs. Donohue wept, slipped down in her chair and covered her face.

Grossman and Dr. G. I. Wetner, a witness, aided by her husband, Thomas, picked up the chair in which she was huddled and carried it from the room. The woman's sob could be heard from the corridor.

WOMEN SHUDDER.

Several other women survivors of the group of one-time employees of the radium company, paled and shuddered. Nine of their friends and former fellow workers already were dead.

When the hearing was resumed, Dr. Dailloch said that Mrs. Donohue might live for several months under proper treatment.

Her case was heard by a sort of death schedule agreement among other petitioners. She is expected to be the next to die, and as one of the women, Mrs. Ruth Payne of La Salle, said:

"We want her to have her chance in court."

Mrs. Donohue came to the hearing.

Continued on Page 3, Column 1.



DO YOU KNOW?

1. Who was the Chicago Civic Opera Building destroyed?
2. How long was John J. McGraw manager of Yankees?
3. What is a dollop?
4. Who wrote "Rash and Herkin"?
5. What is a fierce in cards?

Answers on Editorial Page.

MRS. CATHERINE DONOHUE, RADIUM POISON VICTIM, JUST AFTER SHE COLLAPSED.
Her husband, Thomas Donohue, comes to her aid during hearing on compensation for injuries.

Copyright, 1928, by The Chicago Herald and Examiner. All rights reserved.

A page from the Herald Examiner showing Catherine Donohue during the trials. (Moore web)



This cartoon was printed by the American Weekly, titled Poisoned! It was meant to warn other women of the dangers of lip-pointing with radium paint. (Clark xiv)



**RADIUM
EMANATION WATER**
Drives Out Uric Acid

Suffering from too much uric acid and diseases caused by faulty elimination—**Rheumatism, Gout, Periodical Headaches, Neuralgia, Constipation, Neurasthenia, Auto-Intoxication and Lack of Bodily Vigor**—quickly relieved in a natural way without drugs or chemicals by our new discovery

**THE WAY TO MAKE
RADIUM WATER
IN YOUR OWN HOME**

with our Rayode. A little device containing Radium enough to supply 2,700 Mache Units of Radio-activity, in two quarts of water every twenty-four hours, for less than 10c a day. The Rayode will last a lifetime.

SEND FOR FREE LITERATURE

Tells how you can buy or rent a Rayode to make Radium Water in your own home, with your own ordinary drinking water. Address:

THE COLORADO RADIUM PRODUCTS COMPANY
635 First National Bank Building Denver, Colo

Advertisement claiming that radium infused water could cure diseases like gout and constipation. (Stockton web)



Statue at the Radium Girl Memorial in Ottawa, IL. (Fox)



At the feet of the statue, the Radium Girl stands upon the face of a clock. This was the initial spark for the Director's concept. (Fox)



Photos from the informative plaques that surround the Radium Girl statue. (Fox)





The Director with the Radium Girl statue in Ottawa, IL. (Fox)

APPENDIX C

PROGRAM



Program cover


 MINNESOTA STATE UNIVERSITY MANAKATO

On the Mainstage

1984
 By George Orwell;
 adapted for the stage by Michael Gene Sullivan
 Feb. 1-4 & 7-11, 2018

Ragtime
 Music by Stephen Flaherty; lyrics by Lynn Ahrens;
 book by Terence McNally;
 based on the novel "Ragtime," by E. L. Doctorow
 Feb. 15-17 & 22-25, 2018

Bye Bye Birdie
 Music by Charles Strouse; lyrics by Lee Adams;
 book by Michael Stewart;
 originally produced by Edward Padula
 April 5-7 & 12-15, 2018

Next in the Studio

Fall Dance Concert
 Dec. 1 & 2, 2017


 MINNESOTA STATE UNIVERSITY, MANAKATO

**Theatre & Dance
Faculty and Staff**

Scott Anderson
Costumer

Amanda Dyslin
Director of Public Relations

George Grubb
Technical Director /Sound Design

Heather E. Hamilton
Acting and Directing

Paul J. Hustoles
Chair, Acting and Directing

Julie Kerr-Berry
Director of Dance

Bonnie Malterer
Business and Office Manager

David McCarl
Costume Design

John David Paul
Scene Design

Melissa Rosenberger
Acting, Directing and Dance

Steven Smith
Lighting Design

Daniel Stark
Dance Technique & Composition

Nick Wayne
Musical Director

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 calling the Department of Theatre & Dance
 at the 507-319-6663 (V), 800-627-3529 or 711 (MRS.TTY).

THESE SHINING LIVES
By Melanie Marnich



7:30 p.m. Nov. 15-18, 2017
Andreas Theatre


 MINNESOTA STATE UNIVERSITY, MANAKATO

Tri-Fold Program Spread

These Shining Lives

By Melanie Marnich

These Shining Lives opens in 1922, at a time when America was being swept by a radium craze. It was heralded as the greatest discovery in medical history. Capable of killing tumors and other medical wonders, radium soon found its way into everyday items promoting an unending list of health benefits.

Radium would make its way into toothpaste for a brighter smile and into an assortment of beauty products ranging from face creams to lipsticks. The wealthy could purchase radium lined glasses, which were said to infuse water with radium that could then be consumed in order for the drinker to unlock even more of radium's health benefits. The military wanted all of its standard-issued watches painted with a special radium mixture called Undark, which once applied to the watch face would glow in the dark and allow the soldiers to see the numbers of the watch even in the darkest pitch of night.

The characters you are about to meet—Catherine and Tom Donohue, Charlotte Purcell, Pearl Payne, Frances O'Connell and Rufus Reed—are all real people who had firsthand experience with the Undark material. I encourage you, as this story unfolds before you, to ask yourself, "Why have I never heard of these women before? Why is their story not one being told in our history classes?"

We tell their story tonight to honor them and to give a voice to the brilliant and brave Shining Women of Ottawa, IL.

—Kristin N. Fox

Cast

Catherine Donohue **Ashley Ziegler**

Tom Donohue **Trevor Belt**

Charlotte Purcell **Zoe Hartigan**

Pearl Payne **Samantha Fairchild**

Frances O'Connell **Sarah Thomas**

Rufus Reed **Gabriel Sell**

Setting

Radium Dial, a watch factory
in Ottawa, IL.

Faculty Advisors

Melissa Rosenberger

George E. Grubb

These Shining Lives is presented
through special arrangements with
Dramatists Play Service,
440 Park Avenue South,
New York, NY 10016

Production Staff

Director

Kristin N. Fox

Scene Design

Dalen O'Connell

Costume Design

Nat Vorel

Lighting Design

John Hocker

Sound Design

Alex Rollins

Production Stage Manager

Natasha Singh

Technical Director

Jared Shofstall

Properties Master

Reegan Tolk

Assistant Stage Manager

Dena Schedivy

Lightboard Operator

Jenna Nevonen

Sound Board Operator

Oliver Raway

Program: Production Staff

APPENDIX D

REHEARSAL SCHEDULE

| Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday | Sunday |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 10/16 7:30 Read-through All CALLED Conference Rm | 10/17 Table Work ALL CALLED | 10/18 Table Work ALL CALLED | 10/19 Table Work ALL CALLED | 10/20 NO CLASS No Rehearsal | 10/21 No Rehearsal | 10/22 Block Scenes: 1, 4, 8, & 20 |
| 10/23 Block Scenes: 3, 6, 10, & 12 | 10/24 Block Scenes: 2, 5, 7, & 11 | 10/25 Block Scenes: 9, 13, 14 & 16 | 10/26 Block Scenes: 15, 17, 18 & 19 | 10/27 No Rehearsal | 10/28 No Rehearsal | 10/29 No Rehearsal |
| 10/30 Work Scenes 1-10 | 10/31 Work Scenes 11-20 | 11/01 OFF-BOOK DAY STUMBLE Scenes 1-10 | 11/02 STUMBLE Scenes 11-20 | 11/03 Run-through | 11/04 No Rehearsal | 11/05 Run-through |

First three weeks of rehearsal.

| Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday | Sunday |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| 11/06 Run-through | 11/07 Run-through <i>Publicity Photo Call</i> | 11/08 Run-through | 11/09 Lights/ Sound Tech | 11/10 Tech | 11/11 Tech | 11/12 Tech Run/ 1 st Dress Rehearsal |
| 11/13 Tech/ Dress | 11/14 Final Tech/ Student Preview | 11/15 OPENING NIGHT! | 11/16 Performance Production Photo Call | 11/17 Performance | 11/18 Final Performance STRIKE | |

Tech week and Performance Dates.

APPENDIX E

SCRIPT NOTATIONS

Light up on Catherine.

*alone down center *

CATHERINE. This isn't a fairy tale, though it starts like one.
It's not a tragedy, though it ends like one.

It's something else.
We're something else.

→ but what? the truth?

We're the wonder.
We're the curiosity.

> Radium craze. Sensationalized news.

The heroes.

The cure.

The failures.

The alchemy.

We're progress and history.

* yes! they are

We're news.

← so much news, even now

We're the new world.

↳ reference to the times

But we're just girls who wanted to work.

* just girls who wanted to work & died for it

CATHERINE. Yes, I do. We could use the money.

TOM. Anyone could use —

CATHERINE. Fine. We need the money. *(That hurt. So she tries to soften it ...)* It'll be easy on both of us. My mom's staying with the babies during the day ... *(Looking for a clock.)* She should be here in a few — *(no clock in the bedroom)*

TOM. She's gonna spoil them.

CATHERINE. Good. They should be spoiled. They're babies.

TOM. You only worked part-time before. This eight-hours-a-day stuff. Not the same thing.

CATHERINE. I know.

TOM. Making good money doesn't come cheap. Work that pays well costs you something. You, sitting at a table all day ... Maybe they try and make it sound fun. But trust me, they call it "work" for a reason.

CATHERINE. Not this job. Everyone I talk to says it's a piece of cake. All the girls on the block applied for it. I just got lucky. Besides, I'll just do it for a while, till we get on our feet. Then I'll quit.

TOM. Really? You'll walk away from it? *Promise?*

★ CATHERINE. Don't worry. I don't want to be some, some career girl. I'm a wife. I'm a mom. But for a little while ...

TOM. Go ahead. Finish the sentence.

- she wants more! Independence.
→ the power of money¹²

a warning?
NO worries

new place.

CATHERINE. Do I look like a girl worth eight cents a watch? Because that's what they get paid. Some of them make over eight dollars a day. ← time is money

TOM. (*Surprised — right down to his ego.*) You're pulling my leg.

CATHERINE. Not bad for a bunch of girls, huh? Who knows. Maybe I'll make more than you someday.

TOM. Ouch. ← ego hit

CATHERINE. Tom, I'm *kidding*. ← playful

TOM. Are you? ← honest

CATHERINE. Of course.

TOM. I know I don't make a ton of money. But I do okay. We're getting by.

CATHERINE. We're *barely* getting by.

TOM. That comment could make an insecure guy insecure. ← ouch → reaction

CATHERINE. We need to do better than "barely."

TOM. I could pick up an extra shift.

CATHERINE. They work you like a dog already. (No. No.)

TOM. I'm just saying, you don't *have* to do this.

CATHERINE. Yes, I do. We could use the money.

Act One, scene 2

9

1931
 SLIDE: 218,723 watches later ... 3 1/2 years

Catherine and Tom's kitchen. later

Tom comes home from work.

◦ Catherine OFF SL

↳ that's my girl

→ rambling along
 TOM. (~~To Catherine, offstage.~~) Katie? Hey, honey. I'm home. Hey. Helluva day. Helluva day. Hot, hot, hot, and no break till one. Kopinski is talking strike. Gianelli reminds him we don't even have a union. Kehoe calls them both commies. And I drop my lunch off the twenty-second story. I could eat a horse. Two. Two horses and a cow. You wanna start dinner? I'll get the kids. Katie? You here? (Catherine enters. She's worried, distracted. He doesn't notice.) There she is. (He kisses her.) How was work?

CATHERINE. (Not so sure.) Fine. Fine. *worried (not listening)

TOM. You make us rich? How many watches you paint today?

CATHERINE. One seventy-five. (\$14.00)

TOM. They're lucky to have you. Hope they know that. You're a one-woman assembly line. Time really is money around that place, isn't it?

CATHERINE. It is. → hasn't noticed how distracted she is

TOM. How are the kids? The kids good today? Your mom have any trouble with them? Because when I left this morning, they were being little monsters. *Cute* little monsters. I mean, they're *our*

going
 something's

◦ shoes
 off
 ◦ suspect
 down
 ◦ get
 cavity

22

Act One, scenes 8 and 9

* a different kind of gossip

CHARLOTTE. I'm gonna raise you ... *(She tosses in a chip.)*

PEARL. I'm out. *(She folds.)* It's awful. Horrible. She was so ...

CHARLOTTE. Pretty?

PEARL. Young, I was going to say.

FRANCES. And Marguerite? *(hersister)* Change in the

PEARL. What about Marguerite? ← group

FRANCES. She had to move back home. I'm out. *(She folds.)* Her and her husband, they lost everything. Doctor's bills, hospital bills, medicine ... They lost their house. They had to move back in with her mom and dad. Now they all pitch in to take care of her.

CATHERINE. Same with Mary Ellen.

FRANCES. I heard.

CATHERINE. And Helen and Inez and Margaret and — *the list goes on*

CHARLOTTE. *(Cutting her off.)* Enough, girls, okay? Enough. We all know we feel awful about this whole mess. We can whine about it till the cows come home. We have whined about it till the cows came home. So do you mind if I make a suggestion?

FRANCES. I think it kind of depends on whether you —

CHARLOTTE. *(Cutting her off.)* We can keep whining or we can actually do something.

FRANCES. Like what?

CHARLOTTE. I don't know. Something ... gutsy. It's not like we got a lot to lose. *↳ she knows.*

PEARL. I don't have the stomach for it.

CHARLOTTE. I'm not saying I do. but

Strength
a-sorrow

always
for
action

CATHERINE. It wonders what it would feel like to hire the best lawyer I could find.

PEARL. You would sue? You really would? ^{house wife? Educated? Brave?}

CATHERINE. No. I don't know. Women like me don't stir up

trouble. We play nice and do what we're told. ^{But not anymore!}

CHARLOTTE. Tell ya what, Katie. Let's make this game interesting. I win, I decide what we're going to do. You win, you decide. Okay?

PEARL. What exactly do you mean by "what we're going to do?"

CHARLOTTE. If we're going to put up a fight — or lie down and die. Because that's our choice as I see it. *(A beat.)* Okay?

CATHERINE. No no no no no. I can't. *(stalling)*

CHARLOTTE. You're really gonna leave it up to me?

PEARL. Katie! *(encouraging)*

FRANCES. *(To Pearl.)* Shh! *(stop encouraging this!)*

CATHERINE. Okay. Okay. I can't believe I'm saying this ... But, you're on. *(Frances crosses herself.)*

CHARLOTTE. *(Laying her cards on the table.)* Three aces. *(Catherine puts her head in her hands.)* Sore loser? *(Pearl takes Catherine's cards and places them on the table.)*

PEARL. Full house. ^{*(hiding that she has won)*}

FRANCES. I'll be damned.

CHARLOTTE. *(In shock.)* You won. I can't believe it. Of all times, you won.

CATHERINE. I don't want to decide this. I really, really don't. Somebody else! Someone else should do this. Not me. I just — I really can't. I'm not cut out for it. You know that. Char, you're the one. You do this. Come on. ^{↳ excuses}

CHARLOTTE. I lost fair and square.

CATHERINE. Okay. Okay. Okay, then. Forgive me, but ... I think we do the only thing we can do. ^{↳ to Frances}

FRANCES. Which is ... ^{↳ go get 'em}

CATHERINE. Fix our hair, stand up straight, and go get / those sons of — *(Light up on Leonard Grossman, vivid, avuncular, aggressive.)*

GROSSMAN. *(Overlapping on the /.)* Those sons of bitches — Sorry, ladies, sorry.

#gas

#power to the femme

TOM. How could they? ^{her fear.}
 CATHERINE. Don't you forget me. Please?
 TOM. Katie. ^{her guilt, again}
 CATHERINE. This shouldn't happen to you. You, left alone with two kids. Tom?
 TOM. Yeah?
 CATHERINE. I'm not afraid of death. Really, I'm not. I'm just afraid of how I'll get there. ^{← so much pain.}
 TOM. No one on earth can hold a candle to you. No one in heaven will come close. <sup>← acceptance of her death?
 ◦ comfort in her fear?
 ◦ love against all odds</sup>

19

SLIDE OF MASTHEAD: CHICAGO HERALD
 AND EXAMINER
 February 12, 1938

each in own light

- fierce
 - no-
 none ~~score~~

REPORTER 1. Mrs. Donohue came to the hearing today supported by her husband and a friend. Once healthy and alert, she weighed only 71 pounds and could hardly stand alone. *

REPORTER 2. In her testimony, she explained with the guidance of her attorney.

GROSSMAN. You were what age when you started working for the company?

CATHERINE. Nineteen. ^{(lights up!) → so weak}

JUDGE 2. Mrs. Donohue, please speak clearly for the record.

CATHERINE. Yes, your honor.

JUDGE 2. Thank you.

GROSSMAN. And your specific work was to ...

CATHERINE. I painted watch faces with a powder, a radium compound. We'd point the brush between our teeth, dip it in water, then in the powder. But it got everywhere. My hands glowed. My clothes, hanging in a dark closet, glowed. When I walked home at night, I glowed.

JUDGE 2. P. ...

Shows! her pain is prominent here!

Act Two, scenes 18 & 19

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