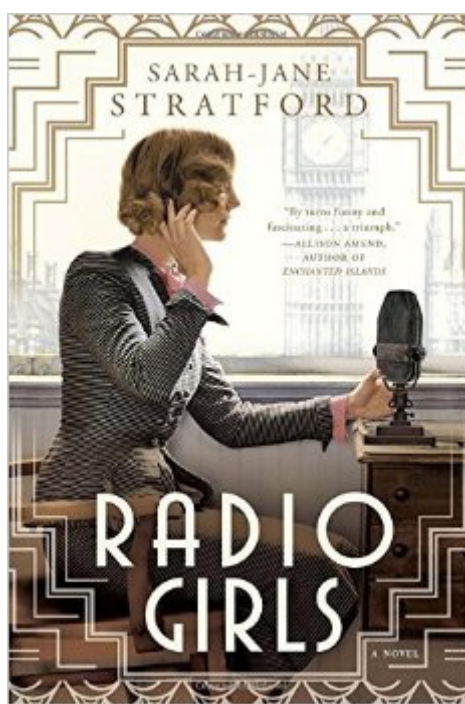


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Radio Girls



Synopsis

The Great War is over, and change is in the air, in this novel that brings to life the exciting days of early British radio and one woman who finds her voice while working alongside the brilliant women and men of the BBC. London, 1926. American-raised Maisie Musgrave is thrilled to land a job as a secretary at the upstart British Broadcasting Corporation, whose use of radio "still new, strange, and electrifying" is captivating the nation. But the hectic pace, smart young staff, and intimidating bosses only add to Maisie's insecurity. Soon, she is seduced by the work "gaining confidence as she arranges broadcasts by the most famous writers, scientists, and politicians in Britain. She is also caught up in a growing conflict between her two bosses, John Reith, the formidable Director-General of the BBC, and Hilda Matheson, the extraordinary director of the hugely popular Talks programming, who each have very different visions of what radio should be. Under Hilda's tutelage, Maisie discovers her talent, passion, and ambition. But when she unearths a shocking conspiracy, she and Hilda join forces to make their voices heard both on and off the air and then face the dangerous consequences of telling the truth for a living.

READERS GUIDE INCLUDED

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

NOTE: I received an ARC of this book via Penguin Random House's First To Read in order to provide an honest review. I was not required to write a positive review. All opinions contained herein are my own. Radio Girls is a remarkable, captivating, and powerful story about determined, courageous, resilient women at the BBC during the turbulent years between WWI and WWII.

Sarah-Jane Stratford magnificently intertwined history and fiction flawlessly in this most intriguing, captivating, biographical historical novel. While this story follows the fictional character of Maisie, it is also a factual account of the life of one of Britain's most influential women, Hilda Matheson. Hilda's intelligence and perception transformed the airwaves as BBC's first Director of Talks enlightening and self-assuring the women of her time. The story started out slow, but it was needed so one would know the backgrounds of both the real and fictional characters and how they fit together. It didn't take long before the story took off sweeping me back in time to the 1920s with intrigue and drama and it never lets go. I was drawn into the story as though I was one of the girls working right along with Maisie and Hilda in the Talks department. I wish it never had to come to an end. Radio Girls as a whole was a fascinating look into the BBC during 1920s London which fully captivated me from beginning to end. I absolutely highly recommend this first-rate invigorating story.

I can only describe reading RADIO GIRLS as a purely joyful experience. Sarah-Jane Stratford beautifully weaves fact with fiction in this unapologetically feminist "and I mean that as the highest of compliments" foray into the early days of the BBC, and the women who made it such a smashing success. Our heroine is the fictional Maisie Musgrave in the real and exciting era of Post WWI London. At first Maisie is meek and yearns to fit into societal norms. But she truly opens up and embraces her snarky voice and sense of self when she finds the love she has always been looking for. No, not in a husband (although there is definitely romance). In her work. What begins as a job transforms into a career with the help of the real-life BBC producer Hilda Matheson. (Note: I would like to be Hilda when I grow up.) RADIO GIRLS transported me to a time of intellectual exploration (Bloomsbury buffs will be pleased with some of the cameos), women's suffrage, as well as Europe's ominous turn to fascism -- and I didn't want it to end.

Sarah-Jane Stratford delivers a wonderful tale of the early days at The BBC. Her main characters, Maisie and Hilda are absolutely delightful, clever and heroically strong young women. It's a book meant for anyone that's ever questioned whether they have fortitude to accomplish the near impossible. We're giving it to our daughters and someday hopefully our granddaughters. We're certainly hopeful many readers will take the time to purchase and enjoy 'Radio Girls.' They surely won't be disappointed.

Glad this wasn't just a love story, or a girl climbing the employment ladder, or about class warfare, or another mystery.....it was all that and much more!! thoroughly enjoyed the first half of the book

and then paid close attention to the second half. Thanks to the author for an intellectually stimulating book.

Of course, some may prefer that their mentor not lead them into risking life and limb but that's why you get to follow this by turns hilarious and harrowing tale from the comfort and safety of your sofa, cup of tea in hand. But mind you don't let the tea get cold as this is one of those delightfully engaging books that grips you from the first page and makes you forget the modern world around you. You are thoroughly transported to the London of the 1920s and you don't want to leave when it's over, even knowing what is looming in the next decade. There are writers who have a gift with a turn of phrase and there are writers who can pace a good story, but rarely do the twain meet. Sarah-Jane Stratford is the exceptional author who deftly combines both qualities. Her characters are all multi-faceted individuals; no-one is allowed to be merely a two-dimensional stereotype. Every period detail is well-researched but the descriptions are never intrusive and somehow manage to engage with the flow of the narrative rather than interrupting it. Anyone who reads or writes historical fiction will grasp what an achievement that is. I hope this book is made into a movie or BBC series. In the meantime, I will be reading it again.

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