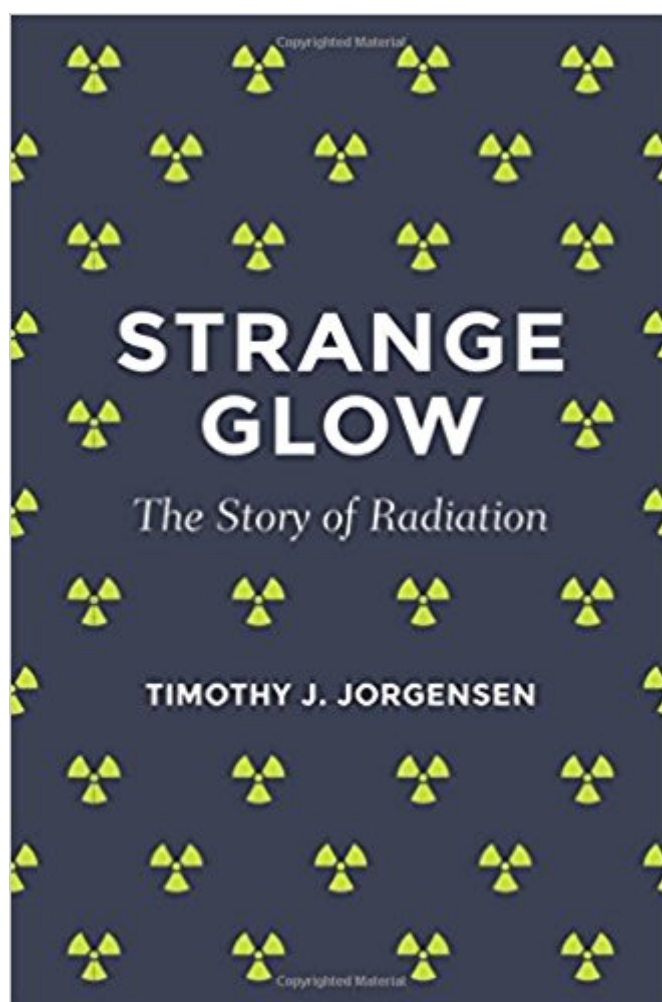


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Strange Glow: The Story Of Radiation



Synopsis

More than ever before, radiation is a part of our modern daily lives. We own radiation-emitting phones, regularly get diagnostic x-rays, such as mammograms, and submit to full-body security scans at airports. We worry and debate about the proliferation of nuclear weapons and the safety of nuclear power plants. But how much do we really know about radiation? And what are its actual dangers? An accessible blend of narrative history and science, *Strange Glow* describes mankind's extraordinary, thorny relationship with radiation, including the hard-won lessons of how radiation helps and harms our health. Timothy Jorgensen explores how our knowledge of and experiences with radiation in the last century can lead us to smarter personal decisions about radiation exposures today. Jorgensen introduces key figures in the story of radiation--from Wilhelm Roentgen, the discoverer of x-rays, and pioneering radioactivity researchers Marie and Pierre Curie, to Thomas Edison and the victims of the recent Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant accident. Tracing the most important events in the evolution of radiation, Jorgensen explains exactly what radiation is, how it produces certain health consequences, and how we can protect ourselves from harm. He also considers a range of practical scenarios such as the risks of radon in our basements, radiation levels in the fish we eat, questions about cell-phone use, and radiation's link to cancer. Jorgensen empowers us to make informed choices while offering a clearer understanding of broader societal issues. Investigating radiation's benefits and risks, *Strange Glow* takes a remarkable look at how, for better or worse, radiation has transformed our society.

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Customer Reviews

Timothy Jorgensen has written an account of radiation which chronicles the science, personalities and history involved in our understanding of this seemingly mysterious and yet very important and all-pervasive entity. In addition the book does a very good job of dispelling many myths about the correlation between radiation and health issues like cancer. The book excels mainly in three ways. Firstly Jorgensen provides an exciting and clear account of the scientific history of radiation, ranging from the intriguing observations of radioactivity in natural ores and in radioactive rays at the turn of the twentieth century, all the way to the science of nuclear explosions and nuclear reactors. Along the way there are also revealing insights into topics like radiation units, radioactivity in the environment and the biological effects of radiation, especially on genetic material. Jorgensen is a clear and enthusiastic explainer. Secondly, the book narrates the stories of the fascinating personalities who were involved in the story of radiation. These involve both brilliant scientists like Rutherford, Mueller, the Curies and the Braggs as well as lesser known scientists and doctors who were instrumental in unearthing the nature and effects of this elemental entity. More importantly though, the book excels in painting sobering portraits of the victims of the misuse of radiation, such as the "radium girls" in Connecticut and New Jersey who got sick from licking the radium-laced tips of brushes used to paint luminous watch dials to the Pacific islanders who were the victims of atomic tests which were conducted as part of the power play of the superpowers.

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