

Memoirs & Boudoirs

Gossip!

Play Synopsis

Secrets!

Imagine a world before the Internet, smart phones, Facebook, Skype, Twitter, and Selfies. What did people do? How did they survive? How did they communicate? They wrote lengthy letters (tons of them), kept detail-filled diaries, and penned juicy memoirs. *Memoirs & Boudoirs*, a fast-paced, funny, entertaining one-woman show in the format of a time-traveling magazine-style television program (a la *Entertainment! Tonight*), is a play of gossip, rumors, scandals, love and hate through the ages. Led by emcee Katie Sawyer (Dorothy Leeds) and a “cast” of valiant reporters, *Memoirs & Boudoirs* takes you on an amazing journey through history and directly into the lives, ballrooms, backrooms, and bedrooms of Kings, Queens, Scoundrels, Lovers, and Warriors—all (or almost all) in their own words.

This 80-minute one-act play with a delightful musical theme and audience interaction is filled with scintillating stories and titillating testimonies from VIPs around the world, including the words, wit, and wisdom of more than a dozen historical figures, such as Henry VIII, Catherine the Great, Marie Antoinette, Benjamin Franklin, Dolley Madison, Peter the Great, Sarah Bernhardt, and Abraham Lincoln. Through the words of these naughty notables themselves, *Memoirs & Boudoirs* will answer questions like:

What was Henry VIII like when he was young, slim, and in love?

What did Napoleon find so captivating about Josephine?

What is Dolley Madison’s important connection to ice cream?

What were Benjamin Franklin’s views on dallying with an older woman rather than a young one?

How did Marie Antoinette’s mother keep tabs on her darling daughter?

Scandal!

Secret!

PRODUCTION REQUIREMENTS: *Memoirs & Boudoirs* can be performed with a simple setting consisting of 3 rectangular tables and 2 stools and a CD player for music cues. A lighting plot will be provided for theatres. The show is designed to play in a variety of spaces, from classrooms to theatres.

Passion!

Intrigue!

POWER!

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CAST OF CHARACTERS

Anchor and Reporters:

KATIE SAWYER: Brilliant, Rhodes Scholar, the energetic and confident news anchor and host of *Memoirs & Boudoirs*, television's only time-traveling tabloid show.

ANNE SLANDERS: Brash, chummy, and good-hearted advice columnist who always adds color and flavor to her gossipy commentary.

CHANEL J. ABACROMBIE: She sees the world through style and fashion. *M&B*'s fashion reporter can be a bit condescending; exclusivity is her goal.

FANNY FROMER: An adventurous tomboy who has journeyed all over the world. A travel correspondent with flair who has picked up spicy secrets along the way.



Featured “Celebrities” and their writings:



Abraham Lincoln: Not all love is of the romantic kind. The love of a father for his son is nowhere better demonstrated than in this letter our 16th president wrote to the headmaster of the school his son would soon attend.

Benjamin Franklin: In this letter from 1745, Franklin sent advice to a young friend espousing that he choose older women rather than young ones as he embarked on the “dating” scene.



Catherine the Great: The day Catherine gave birth to her first child did not go exactly as Catherine had envisioned. She detailed the whole sorry affair in her personal diary.

Dolley Madison: Not only do we find out from a friend about Dolley Madison (and her sister) as fashion plates of their time, we hear in Dolley's own words how she saved many White House valuables, including the official portrait of George Washington, from falling in the clutches of the British army during the War of 1812.



Elizabeth Barrett Browning: One of the most famous love letters of all times comes in the form of a sonnet (*How Do I Love Thee*) written by the romantic poet, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, who exchanged more than 574 letters with her husband-to-be, poet Robert Browning, during the 20 months of their courtship.

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Friedrich Weber: The two journal entries of this German ambassador to the court of Peter the Great describe—in detail—the bathing habits of the 18th century Russian populace, as well as a decadent drunken weekend he spent with the tsar.

Gustave Flaubert: The French author famous for searching for just the right word writes a beautifully composed love letter to the woman he adored.

Henry VIII: Although he had a reputation for executing his many wives, the much-married Tudor King of England was a romantic at heart, as shown by the first love letter he ever wrote to his soon-to-be second wife, the beautiful Anne Boleyn.



John Adams: John and Abigail Adams are one of the most celebrated couples in American history, as demonstrated by the sweet missive John wrote to Abigail while he was courting her.



Marie Antoinette: After being convicted of treason, sexual promiscuity, and incestuous relations, Marie Antoinette was sentenced to death by guillotine. Just before her execution, she wrote her last letter ever, to her sister-in-law, Madame Elisabeth.

Maria Therese: The mother of Marie Antoinette, Maria Therese wrote out implicit instructions to her daughter outlining exactly how her days at the court should be spent—and her nights, too.



Mary Queen of Scots: Imprisoned in Fotheringhay Castle in England, the last letter she ever wrote before she was beheaded was to Henry III, King of France, informing him of her coming execution.

Napoleon Bonaparte: Most people think that there was a great love story between Napoleon and Josephine Bonaparte. The truth? Napoleon's great passion for Josephine, as seen in his over-the-top declarations of love, was decidedly one-sided.



Sarah Bernhardt: Oh, the drama! When world-renowned actress known as “the divine Sarah” had a falling out with her adored lover, she wrote and begged him to return to her and love her “in the name of love.”

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OUTREACH: MASTER CLASSES AND WORKSHOPS

Dorothy's outreach to the community is impressive. In addition to her one-woman play, she can provide a variety of participative and enlightening master classes and workshops for students, inner city youth organizations, women's shelters, hospitals, libraries, community colleges, and universities. Her programs range from one hour up to two days. Here are some examples:

THEATRE ARTS PROGRAMS:

WRITING AND PERFORMING YOUR OWN ONE-PERSON PLAY: Just as everyone has a novel inside, every performer has a one-person play. Often the difficulty is how to get started. In this interactive, hands-on workshop, participants will craft/work with a 3-5 minute play, complete with exposition, character development, conflict, and resolution. Participants will perform their plays and receive feedback.

CREATING AND PERFORMING MULTIPLE CHARACTERS: The ultimate challenge for performers is the one-person play with multiple characters. Often, they focus on voice and accent while overlooking character development. Through improvisation and demonstration, this workshop will help participants focus on the inner life of each character.

BUSINESS/LEADERSHIP PROGRAMS:

MARKET YOURSELF: THE ULTIMATE JOB SEEKERS GUIDE: How can you get an employer's attention, stand out from the crowd, and get job offers you really want? The one common trait of all successful job seekers is their ability to sell and market themselves. This interactive workshop teaches job seekers of the 21st century how to become "career entrepreneurs," treating themselves as if they were a small business and using all the sales and marketing techniques any small business needs to survive.

THE POWER OF QUESTIONS: ACTIVATE YOUR POTENTIAL: Wouldn't it be wonderful to avoid mistakes and misunderstandings, get the right information the first time, gain greater control, and become a quality listener? You can do more and be more, professionally and personally by asking the right questions and acting on the answers. Think more productively, lead with confidence, persuade with ease, initiate and manage change, make better decisions, and improve all your relationships by tapping into the power of questions.

PRAISE FOR DOROTHY LEEDS

From the moment she took the stage, Dorothy immediately took control of the space, and the audience was with her for the entire show. As she shifted seamlessly from character to character, Dorothy was able to effectively deliver equal parts hilarity and captivation to her audience. The show ended to thunderous applause.

Adam Payne, Director, Arts & Lectures Program, Bentley University

Dorothy Leeds' performance of Good Lessons for Bad Women was a highlight of our programming year. The audience was enthralled and thoroughly engaged in this educational and entertaining show. Ms. Leeds was a pleasure to meet and work with.

Jean Retkwa, Librarian, Woodbridge Main Library

Thank you very much for your fantastic performances of Good Lessons From Bad Women at the Larcom Theatre last month. Our audiences really loved the show and you and your team were a pleasure to work with. I particularly appreciate all of your involvement in the advance marketing and PR efforts, and the easy availability of quality marketing materials. This makes a big difference to us in helping to get the word out to our area theatre-goers.

Peter Lally, Larcom Theatre, Beverly, MA



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SELECTED PERFORMANCES / WORKSHOPS / LECTURES

Dorothy Leeds has graced the stage worldwide from North America to Botswana with stops in Mexico, London, Malaysia, Bhutan, Singapore, and Egypt.

The following are selected engagements spanning her thirty years of performing, authoring, and keynoting:

Adelphi University	Garden City, NY
Belmont University	Nashville, TN
Bronx Library Center	Bronx, NY
Centennial Theatre	Colorado Springs, CO
Clemson University	Clemson, SC
Eastern Connecticut State University	Willimantic, CN
Harper Community College	Palatine, IL
Husson College	Bangor, ME
Ivy Tech Community College	Richmond, IN
Lakeland Community College	Kirtland, OH
Larcom Theatre	Beverly, MA
Metropolitan Museum of Art	New York, NY
Michigan Union Theatre, University of Michigan	Ann Arbor, MI
National Theatre	Washington, DC
Nederlander Theatre	Detroit, MI
Northwestern University	Evanston, IL
Ossining Public Library	Ossining, NY
Paper Mill Playhouse	Millburn, NJ
Pikes Peak Community College	Colorado Springs, CO
Royal Alexander Theatre	Toronto, ON Canada
San Antonio College	San Antonio, TX
Schubert Theatre	Boston, MA
Smoot Theatre	Parkersburg, WV
Tappan Zee Playhouse	Nyack, NY
The Enoch Pratt Free Library	Baltimore, MD
The New York Public Library	New York, NY
University of Florida	Gainesville, FL
University of Texas	Austin, TX
University of St. Louis	St. Louis, MO
University of Wisconsin, Union Theatre	Madison, WI
University of Wisconsin	Oshkosh, WI

Dorothy has also appeared at Barnes & Noble and Borders bookstores in Atlanta, Phoenix, Scottsdale, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Boston, New York City, Trenton, Newark, Philadelphia, Dallas, Fort Worth, Chicago, Baltimore, Detroit, Danbury, Hartford, New Haven, Columbus, Cleveland, Cincinnati, Arlington, Palm Springs, San Diego, Denver, Colorado Springs, and Washington, DC.

Through her corporate presentations at many of the world's top organizations, Dorothy is committed to empowering people to fulfill their highest potential. Her client list includes: Pfizer, Merrill Lynch, Conde Nast, Hearst, Verizon, Boeing, IBM, Merck, Wharton School of business, The CIA, AMA, IRS, and All State.

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DOROTHY LEEDS

Performer / Playwright / Author / Speaker

Wearing multiple hats, Dorothy Leeds is a performing artist and a bestselling author/speaker. Dorothy asserts that she does two things well: entertain and educate. These two fields of endeavor have been part of her life since her pre-teens, when she performed Emily in *Our Town*. Margaret Craske, then ballet mistress of American Ballet Theatre, was in the audience and claimed that Dorothy had more stage presence than any performer she had ever seen. This was enough to set Dorothy dreaming of a theatrical career. As a theatre major, she was the first freshman in the history of Northwestern University to secure a lead in a play. In college and summer stock, she played roles as diverse as Jeannie in *Brigadoon* and Aunt Penniman in *The Heiress*. Then off she went to Manhattan and started studying and auditioning with fervor and fury. Dorothy became a song and dance gal, landing her first Broadway credit in *Stop the World I Want to Get Off*. She continued honing her craft in such diverse venues as *The Tonight Show with Johnny Carson*, commercials, industrials shows, films, and children's theatre.

Retiring from the theatre, or so she thought, Leeds raised a family, started a knitwear company and had a successful career in advertising. Although committed to her theatrical hat, she also enjoyed her education chapeau and started giving lectures on how to market yourself. A program director from the American Management Association attended and convinced Dorothy to enter the world of business. As her business success grew, Dorothy donned her author hat and wrote twelve books, including *PowerSpeak*, *Smart Questions*, and *The 7 Powers of Questions* (endorsed on the front cover by New York's then mayor, Michael Bloomberg).

However, you can't take show business out of a performer, and Dorothy's theatrical side was always bubbling beneath the surface. Combining her show biz background with her business savvy, she created "infotainment," integrating music, rhyme, engaging characters, songs, and rap in her lectures, keynotes, and workshops.

During this time, Dorothy was a featured guest on more than 250 radio stations nationwide and appeared frequently on broadcast and cable television including *The Today Show*, *Good Morning America*, FX, *Nightly Business Report* (PBS), and *The Tonight Show*. She has written for and/or been featured in articles in such publications as *The New York Times*, *Success*, the *LA Times*, *The Daily News*, *Glamour*, *Self*, *USA Today*, *Forbes*, *Cosmopolitan*, and *Business Week*. She hosted her own radio talk show on WEHM East Hampton, co-hosted an award-winning public affairs show, *Best Talk*, on Channel 11 in New York City, and served as a film critic for MSNBC for two years.

Several years ago she collaborated with award-winning playwright and Lila Acheson Fellow at Julliard, Daphne Greaves, to create *Good Lessons from Bad Women*, which premiered in 2006 at the University of Wisconsin. Since then, Dorothy has performed to enthusiastic audiences and exceptional reviews nationwide.

In 2014, Dorothy not only crafted *The Hot Water Club* (a young adult version of *Good Lessons from Bad Women*), but also wrote and produced her current one-woman tour de force, *Memoirs & Boudoirs*.

She is an active member of Actor's Equity Association, The Dramatists Guild, and SAG/AFTRA, and is co-secretary to the League of Professional Theatre Women.

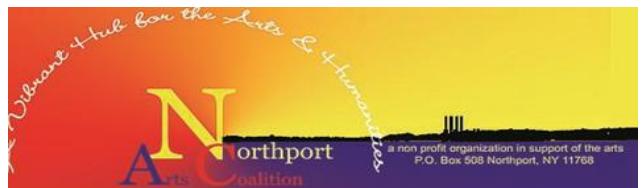
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TESTIMONIALS

"A small, lean figure dressed in black with a cap of red hair, using 3 hats and a series of tray tables and stools beguiled an audience for almost an hour and ½. *Memoirs and Boudoirs* was a master (or should we say "Mistress") piece of research into the often scandalous love letters and other documents of scoundrels, nobles and dignitaries that Ms. Leeds wove into a fascinating narrative. Her verve and acting abilities left us gasping and laughing and almost brought to tears as she unearthed the human frailties of historical figures like Henry the VIII.

Spoiler alert: The last letter in her rich reticule will have you going to your browser for a copy to keep close to your heart!"

Charlotte Koons
2nd Wednesdays Coordinator
Northport Arts Coalition



"Thank you very much for your appearance and wonderful show at our branch. The program "Memoirs & Boudoirs" was exciting, daring and insightful. You took the audience and me into a world that few gain entrance. The letters, journals and histories you draw upon were fantastic. I couldn't believe the beautiful love letters of Napoleon and Henry the 8th. You certainly changed many patrons' preconceived notions about these men and the other historical personage you read and talked about. I know you certainly changed much I took for granted. The question and answer part was great, it just drew the whole program together.

We look forward to have you entertain our public again. "

Fred Michel
Senior Adult Librarian
New York Public Library



"Dorothy Leeds' one-woman play *Memoirs and Boudoirs* made for a delightful evening of history and entertainment! Based on diary entries and personal accounts of such great historical figures as Catherine the Great, Dolly Madison, and Henry VIII, she presented a side of history not often mentioned in textbooks. Her energy and passion were evident, and many people raved, "She was wonderful!" "What a marvelous play!" We enjoyed her play, *Good Lessons from Bad Women* and were thrilled to have this one presented as well."

Jennifer Rees Schulze
Adult Services
Westfield Memorial Library

