

British Theatre Guide

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The View from Nowhere

Chuck Anderson

Random Thoughts Limited in association with Park Theatre

Park Theatre

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Dr P G Washington, known as Prez, is the charismatic scientist at the centre of Chuck Anderson's play about science and corporate malpractice *The View from Nowhere*.

He has been researching the impact on the environment of the chemical atraphosphate and has found evidence that the chemical may be causing cancer and changes in the endocrine system. His experiments on frogs suggest it may be disturbing the function of the sex glands.

He is popular on the lecture circuit and we see something of his style at the start of the play. He is also well respected as a scientist and supported by his research team. All this helps give his findings a greater profile.

Rona Worthing (Nina Toussaint-White), a senior manager at the company Alchemex which produces the chemical, believes she can stop any bad publicity about atraphosphate.

The company offers to fund Prez's (Mensah Bediako) research and invites him to join a peer review committee to examine the effects of the chemical. This seems to make no difference to Prez's determination to air his concerns.

This leads Rona to decide on a much dirtier campaign to silence him. Detectives are hired to find material to smear his reputation. People are paid to heckle him on his lecture tour and other scientists are encouraged to sign a letter criticising his research.

Prez begins to feel understandably paranoid. It sours his relationship with other scientists, and even complicates things with his own research team in particular the passionately dedicated Sandy Jones (Emma Mulkern).

Dr Tom Pennington (Math Sams) is the representative of Alchemex in its official dealings with Prez and is deeply troubled by the unethical practices of the company.

This is a brisk, watchable thriller performed in-the-round on a minimalist set. Its sympathies are with the scientists pressured to deliver research that doesn't damage the chemical company profits.

It never digs very deep into the reasons why companies may choose to ignore or hide the health risks of their products. Nor does it explore the very complicated way this can shape the behaviour of people. But it does raise important questions and hopefully sparks further debate on issues that should concern us all.

Reviewer: [Keith Mckenna](#)