

❖ Sample Assignment #2

ILS 251: Contemporary Physical Sciences

Cathy Middlecamp

Spring 2007

PROJECT #2 Radioactivity and People

This course has several higher order learning goals. One is that you are able to take what you learn in one context and apply it to another. This project offers you the opportunity. We hope you will enjoy it and find the time spent well worth your efforts. To quote a former student', the project was "one of my favorites to work on in my college career!"

OVERVIEW: This semester, you have encountered two stories in which people and radioactive substances were intimately connected. The first was the Radium Girls; the second the Firecracker Boys. Your task (should you choose to accept it) is to find a third story involving people and radioactivity anywhere on the planet.

EXAMPLES: Please examine these topics from previous years. Each one involves both people and radioactive substances. The people are citizens in a city or town, an indigenous group, those living at a particular location, or perhaps those carrying out a common job or mission. The radioactivity may involve contamination of the land, leukemia or lung cancer, the disposal of nuclear waste, testing of atomic weapons, nuclear accidents, the medical experimentation with radioisotopes, or perhaps just having a radioisotope in the wrong place at the wrong time.

- Storing Nuclear Waste on Tribal Land – Yucca Mountain
- Depleted Uranium (DU) in Iraq – A Weapon of Mass Destruction
- The H-Bomb and the Marshallese People
- The Palomares Incident in Spain
- The Secret Disaster at Mayak

YOUR TOPIC: Each person needs a unique area of inquiry. Accordingly, before beginning your research you need to confirm your topic with your instructor. If you wish to work on a particular topic of interest, please claim it early. Once your instructor has all of the topics, she will group them according to a master plan (optimistically she can find one). You will know the date of your presentation by spring break.

YOUR PAPER: Mid-semester (and before your class presentation), you will submit a polished 5 page paper. **Your paper must present the reader with a thesis; that is, a point of view that you introduce early on and later revisit in your conclusion.** Your Writing Fellow will provide written feedback on your paper and meet with you in person to discuss the specifics. Look to your Writing fellow for (1) help in developing and conveying your thesis, and for (2) tips for writing with better clarity and style. Your instructor will offer feedback on (1) your content, helping to trouble shoot any errors, and (2) your references, helping you to cite correctly. Using this dual feedback, you will revise your paper and resubmit it at the end of the semester.

Prepare the first version of your paper as a "final draft," that is, it should represent your best work. Those of us who read your paper are going to invest significant time/energy in reviewing it. Thus you need to invest this same time/energy. Please use this format:

- Software Microsoft Word only
- Format Double-spaced, 1 inch margins, 12 point font, page
- Page 1 Title page: include the title, your name, the date, the course, and your
 Writing Fellow's name
- Page 2-6 The body of your paper
- Page 7+ Any figures, tables, photographs