



Yale-New Haven  
Teachers Institute®

Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute

1996 Volume II: Environmental and Occupational Health: What We Know; How We Know; What We Can Do

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## **Is Gulf War Syndrome A Significant Health Issue The U.S. Government Has Tried To Cover Up?**

Guide for Curriculum Unit 96.02.10

by Alan K. Frishman

This study of the Persian Gulf War Syndrome provides an opportunity for students in a history class to investigate issues that are, at most, a few years old and, accordingly, have an immediate relevance to them. The primary activity for this unit is to allow students to examine thirty pieces of evidence from the war and its subsequent medical effects, along with official governmental comments about these pieces of evidence, as well as a complete radio script of a brief documentary on this topic that was aired on National Public Radio, and to encourage them to form their conclusions. They will be asked to compare their own conclusions with the official governmental line and, through a switch-side debating activity, to defend both sides of the issue.

Another objective of this unit is interdisciplinary, to work within a team of teachers from the history and mathematics departments at the high school that will be exploring the Gulf War Syndrome, each in its own way, and each one preparing a curriculum unit that both connects with the others and stands on its own. This interdisciplinary unit will in turn provide the core of a school-wide interdisciplinary exploration of the theme of environmental and occupational health. The debate mentioned above will be judged by the students in a class taught by another fellow in this seminar, Toni Coughlin, whose class will stage a mock trial, in turn judged by students in my class.

(Recommended for U.S. History 2 and Advanced U.S. History 2, grade 11; and Advanced Placement U.S. History, grades 11-12)

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