

1 April 2025

### SPSA Reflection Paper

When Mareez and I were first paired up, we were concerned about how we could pair up our topics since they seemed very different. My topic focused more on the LIRR and its negative environmental impact whereas Mareez discussed safety concerns regarding the MTA system/infrastructure. We realized both our topics were concerned with the safety of the people or the commuters as safety hazards regarding MTA infrastructure were an issue in both the subway and the LIRR. In addition, environmental harm like air pollution would impact the health “safety” of the people serving as an additional hazard. As we put together our topics, we made it so we had an opening statement, which was recorded by Mareez and we presented it with a series of clips and pictures which illustrate what Mareez is saying. We decided to catch the viewers’ attention by making them imagine a scenario which they are likely to relate to. As Mareez scripted and recorded our intro, I worked on gathering the visuals and editing them together so that they could flow smoothly. Our call for action slides provide advice to the people on how after acknowledging the safety issues surrounding the MTA, they can play a part in fixing these issues or making a change.

Before I started this project, I was aware that the LIRR is one of the most sustainable modes of transportation so I thought it would be difficult for me to find a lot of information about its sustainability issues, however as I conducted research, I was surprised to learn about not only the types of pollution but also the amount of pollution the LIRR contributes to which greatly harms the environment. Something I learned about my partner’s topic was the amount of safety concerns surrounding the MTA subway system and the statistics that supported this information. It helped me understand why so many crimes and accidents occur in the subway

system and why it is so important for the MTA or the NY government to address the safety hazards and quickly develop a solution.

One thing I like about the slides that represented my sustainability issue was how they were able to clearly highlight the issue I was trying to explain. The air pollution or train emissions or disturbance can clearly be seen serving as visual evidence for my sustainability issue. In addition, the two figures I included really show how much transportation contributed to the greenhouse gas emissions in the US and why even a little bit of emission from certain modes of transportation is concerning as it builds up and greatly contributes to the issue of worsening air pollution. Despite the decrease in overall greenhouse gas emissions throughout the years, transportation continues to contribute the most to this issue.

The most difficult aspect to include in the PSA format was a detailed explanation of my sustainability issue. In my essay, I had more space to go into detail about the different types of pollution, where they come from, how they affect the environment and the people, and lastly what we can do to overcome these issues. In the PSA, I had to simplify the information I had which is why I chose to focus only on one type of pollution, air pollution, and instead of giving a detailed background, I summarized most of the information and used figures and statistics to support my argument while limiting the number of words I use.

I think PSAs are one of the best genres to promote public awareness of sustainability issues because they are quick in catching your attention, do not require the viewer to do anything other than focus, and are usually quick and short, getting the message across in an effective manner. While other media like pictures can also do the job, they may not be as efficient because they are limited in how much information they can provide without overwhelming the reader and can't be as flexible as a PSA. Even with this PSA assignment, I was able to include some

background and give context to the issue while providing some information about it and offering some advice or “call to action”; it would be difficult to communicate all this information via other media effectively.

My favorite part of working on the group project was how my partner had ideas to make the video better which I had not thought of. We were able to exchange ideas and put them together to produce our PSA, something that would look very different if I were working on it alone. One of the ideas she had was to add transitions between the visuals so that each would transition smoothly and it would look more aesthetically pleasing to the viewer. My least favorite part of working on the group project was trying to come to an agreement regarding certain decisions for the PSA video. While me and my partner agreed on most things, there were a few small details in which we did not fully agree with each other and had to come to a compromise.

An improvement I would like to suggest for the SPSA project is making some of the details clearer or even presenting an example or two of the SPSA projects from the previous year so that the students are clear as to what you are looking for and how they should approach the project. There were some things like citing sources before the reference page which were not explicitly written out and caused a bit of confusion as we tried to navigate and figure out how you would prefer it to be formatted. Overall, this project was highly informative and gave me the opportunity to express my creativity, which I truly appreciated.