

Below are a sample abstract and stand-alone literature review, both composed in Fall 2006 for Honors 191D. Stand-alone literature reviews like this one meet the requirement for Assignment II in 191. These samples can also serve as models for abstracts expected in Honors 391 as well as the literature review portion of expanded papers assigned in Honors 291.

Note: Roche's literature review is written in the third person (without reference to the first-person pronoun "I"), a style preferred in some disciplines and by some instructors.

## Present Day Detention Camps: North Korea Vs. The United States

Margaret Roche

### Abstract

The purpose of this research was to determine how similar detention facilities run by the U.S. government are to the gulags of North Korea. The research spanned many different media sources from online news articles to reports in scholarly journals to an anthology of memoirs and articles concerning the treatment of prisoners in U.S. detention facilities. Although some of the specific details of the camps were inconsistent across sources, this can be attributed to the secret nature of the prison system. However, despite those inconsistencies, an overall theme present in all the sources was the secret nature of the camps as well as U.S. lack of cooperation with human rights standards presented by the United Nations. The research also showed that the U.S. in fact had imprisoned innocent persons. Because of the similarities to North Korea camps in terms of secrecy, the incarceration of innocent people and the deliberate avoidance of compliance with human rights laws, it is possible to compare the U.S. "democratic" government with North Korea's communist regime.

Review is composed in the style of an expository essay with an introduction, discussion, and conclusion.

### Review of the Literature

Kang Chol-Hwan's *The Aquariums of Pyongyang*, a memoir of life in a North Korean gulag, presents the stark reality that concentration camps do still exist to this day. However, the existence of these camps alone is not the only harsh reality. Not only do these detention camps exist under the communist regime of North Korea, but such camps are also present under the supervision of the democratic United States government. Therefore I wonder: how do the U.S. detention camps compare to North Korean gulags? The research of information on U.S. camps included a variety of sources from scholarly articles to online news to an anthology of essays and analyses of secret imprisonment by the U.S. government. In the end, the sources of interest on U.S. detention camps revealed frightening similarities in the structure and nature of the camps to those of North Korean regime.

Concludes introduction with thesis statement.

Includes research question in introduction.

There were some inconsistencies among the research sources. Although the existence of a secret prison system operated by the U.S. throughout the world was acknowledged by most sources (Grooms; Margolis; Meeropol; Priest; Reuters), the number and location of these detention centers varied. ABC's online news article "US has secret prisons: rights groups" claims, according to a Human Rights First report, that the U.S. is holding prisoners in more than two dozen facilities spread throughout the world (Reuters 1). Among these the locations mentioned in the article were Pakistan, Diego Garcia, and Jordan along with the more famous centers of Guantanamo Bay and Abu Ghraib. However, in another similar report on the secret prison system, the Washington Post article "CIA

Cites all sources that agree with this assertion and separates entries with semicolons.

Holds Terror Suspects in Secret Prisons” claims an undetermined amount of “black sites,” as the White House refers to the secret prisons, to have been spread out among eight countries including Thailand, Afghanistan and some democracies in Eastern Europe (Priest 3). Although one might question the reliability of these sources, the nature of the inconsistency between these two articles has less to do with the reliability of the articles than it does with the simple fact that the prison system kept so secret.

Most often summarizes or paraphrases; occasionally quotes directly.

In fact one of the consistencies among the sources of this research was that the information tended to be very vague because of the secret nature of the prisons. As Priest points out in the aforementioned *Washington Post* article, “the existence and locations of the facilities are known to only a handful of officials in the United States and usually, only to the president and a few top intelligence officers in each host country” (1). Besides vague reports attributed to the secrecy of the prison system, another consistent theme in the research was the U.S. contempt for the authority of the United Nations or any group fighting for the human rights of prisoners. Two articles found through the Alt-Press Watch database report the Bush administration’s deliberate avoidance of provisions made by the U.N. to protect human rights. The article “Representing Guantanamo Bay; Two Charlotte attorneys join effort to help prisoners get fair treatment” from a scholarly journal reports Bush’s ability to circumvent the Geneva Conventions by claiming the inmate belong to no organized army (Grooms 2). The U.S. unwillingness to comply to U.N. requests is no new development either, as Dan Margolis points out in his article “UN panel slams U.S. on death penalty, racism.” The U.S. submitted human rights data seven years after the information was requested by the UN (Margolis 2).

Although it may seem ridiculous to compare the war detention camps of the U.S. to concentration camps in a communist country, it is important to note that the U.S. government is incarcerating innocent people too. The most in-depth source of this research, *America’s Disappeared*, is an anthology of prisoner memoirs as well as analytical essays about the Bush administration, highlighting the incarceration of innocent people. The book includes a memoir of Shafiq Rasul and Asif Iqbal who were tortured in Guantanamo for two years without any criminal charge. The main editor of the anthology, Rachel Meeropol, is the granddaughter of famous political prisoners Ethel and Julius Rosenberg [convicted of “conspiracy to commit espionage” and executed in 1953]. Therefore the book probably has the most potential to be heavily biased. However, Meeropol keeps personal feelings out of the book by presenting facts alongside memoirs to present an honest account of the inhumane structure and nature of U.S. detention facilities.

Notes sources making unique contributions or claims.

While there were consistencies as well as inconsistencies throughout the sources in this research concerning specific details of the prisons, both characteristics reflect the secrecy of the U.S. prison system established by George Bush to incarcerate “enemy combatants” (Thorne and Kouzmin 415). Along with the secrecy of the detention camps set up by the U.S., the research also showed the U.S.’s disdain for the provisions provided by the UN to protect prisoner’s human rights. So as the Bush administration continues to incarcerate innocent people based on arbitrary guidelines in a system kept secret from the general public, I wonder just how democratic the American government is. In other words, in light of setting up internment camps, incarcerating innocent people and keeping it all a secret, just how different is George Bush from Kim Il Sung and Kim Jung II?

As well as reviewing, summarizing & comparing sources also evaluates & critiques them.

#### Works Cited

Grooms, John. “Representing in Guantanamo Bay; Two Charlotte attorneys join effort to help prisoners get fair treatment.” *Creative Loafing* 19.36 (2005): 17. *Alt-Press Watch*. ProQuest. W.E.B. Du Bois Library, University of Massachusetts. 5 October 2006

Includes works cited list in MLA style.

- <<http://proquest.umi.com.silk.library.umass.edu:2048/pqdweb?index=2&did=953264511&SrchMode=1&sid=4&Fmt=3&VInst=PROD&VType=PQD&RQT=309&VName=PQD&TS=1160405948&clientId=2724>>.
- Kang Chol-hwan, and Pierre Rigoulot. *The Aquariums of Pyongyang: Ten Years in the North Korean Gulag*. Trans. Yair Reiner. 2001. New York: Basic, 2002.
- Margolis, Dan. "UN panel slams U.S. on death penalty, racism." *People's Weekly World* 21.11 (2006): 8. *Alt-Press Watch*. ProQuest. W.E.B. Du Bois Library, University of Massachusetts. 5 October 2006 <<http://proquest.umi.com.silk.library.umass.edu:2048/pqdweb?index=1&did=1117613161&SrchMode=1&sid=3&Fmt=3&VInst=PROD&VType=PQD&RQT=309&VName=PQD&TS=1160405668&clientId=2724>>.
- Meeropol, Rachel, et al. *America's Disappeared: Secret Imprisonment, Detainees, and the "War on Terror"*. New York: Seven Stories Press, 2005.
- Priest, Dana. "CIA Holds Terror Suspects in Secret Prisons." *Washington Post* 2 November 2005. 5 October 2006 <<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wpdyn/content/article/2005/11/01/AR2005110101644.html>>.
- Reuters. "US has secret prisons: rights groups." *ABC News Online* 18 June 2004. 6 October 2006 <<http://www.abc.net.au/news/newsitems/200406/s1134549.htm>>.
- Thorne, Kym, Alexander Kouzmin. "Borders in an (In)Visible World: Revisiting Communities, Recognizing Gulags." *Administrative Theory & Praxis* 26.3 (2004): 408-429. *Academic Search Premier*. EBSCO. W.E.B. Du Bois Library, University of Massachusetts. 6 October 2006 <<http://web.ebscohost.com.silk.library.umass.edu:2048/ehost/pdf?vid=16&hid=18&sid=eabd6560-ec4b-458e-b598-c2bc9c9ee450%40sessionmgr101>>.