

5/16

- 206.

UNIVERSITY of PENNSYLVANIA

School of Arts and Sciences

Department of History and
Sociology of Science
215 South 34th Street
Philadelphia, PA 19104-6310
215-898-8400

Monday April 22, 1991

Mr. Neil Leifer
Thornton & Early
200 Portland Street
Boston, MA 02114

Dear Mr. Leifer:

It was good to hear from you on Friday! I hope that we can work together -- it sounds like the Kehoe papers might strengthen your case, and learning about the materials you've uncovered will help me. I'm writing my dissertation on industrial air pollution in the first decade or so after World War Two, through a case study of a disaster in two steel towns near Pittsburgh, the 1948 Donora smog. A lot of big names in the asbestos, silicosis, and lead stories investigated the Donora smog -- for Pennsylvania's Department of Health, the United Steelworkers, the Bureau of Mines and Public Health Service, the Industrial Hygiene Foundation, the Kettering Laboratory of Applied Physiology, and on. Through looking at their work, I hope to show how industry and government let such shoddy expertise develop (it's clear why -- to keep air pollution from becoming a recognized cause of legally compensable disease). Lots of telling anecdotes, and what looks like a conspiracy (what sociologists of knowledge would call the "social negotiation of science") to dissociate US Steel from responsibility. The injury and death smog cases were settled out of court in June 1951 after Robert Kehoe of the Kettering assembled an all-star cast of expert witnesses to defend US Steel American Steel and Wire, including Anthony Lanza, Wesley CL Hemeon, Phil Drinker, Hurd C Willett (a founder of MIT's Dept of Meteorology), and H. H. Schrenk (head of the Public Health Service's official investigation into the smog, hired as the Industrial Hygiene Foundation's research director less than a month after publication of the federal government's report!). The more I can learn about lead, the more sense I can make of industrial air pollution research.

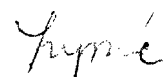
The resource I mentioned over the phone Friday night is the Bay Area Air Pollution Control District library. Arthur Stern mentions the library in the second edition of his Air Pollution manual (copyright 1968); it's a file of about 18,500 articles, unpublished conference presentations, bibliographies,

N22083

and books on air pollution, stretching from the early 1900s to the mid 1970s (copyright on the handwritten author and subject indexes is 1958). In Philadelphia, the local technical institute (Drexel University) has a relatively complete, if dog-eared, microfilm copy, with copies a dime apiece. There may be other copies around the country, and perhaps even an original library; however, one can tell from the microfilms that items were copied all over the place (Stanford Research Institute, Taft Sanitary Engineering Center, etc) so that there may be no such thing as an original library. Came across two papers on lead poisoning from the Lead Industries Association's Nov 15-16, 1948 conference in Chicago, marked "published by the LIA, 1948" in Proceedings of the Lead Hygiene Conference: one by GG Harrold and SF Meek, "Solubility and particle size in lead poisoning," (13 pages) and a second by DR Johns, "The treatment of lead poisoning, past and present," (15 pages).

Anyways, enclosed is a copy of the New York Times article that mentions your case, as well as a copy of the latest letter I sent to the Cincinnati archivist Billie Broadus. As far as travelling time goes, the last week in April (next week) and the week of May 20th look okay right now. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,



Lynne P. Snyder
(home) 215-386-5566
(work) 215-898-4643