On November 30, 1968, the Consolidated Coal Company's Number 9 Mine was sealed, ten days after an explosion that resulted in the deaths of 78 miners.

CSO: SS.8.9, SS.8.25, ELA.8.1

Investigate the Document: (Ms89-41)
1. What led to the decision to ultimately seal the Consolidated Coal Company's Number 9 Mine?

2. What were the possible causes of the explosion?

3. Were there any escapeways?

4. Did the national media attempt to manipulate the coverage of the disaster by untruthful storylines?

5. How much were the widows of the fallen miners given per month?

6. According to Appendix C, how many miners lost their lives in 1968?

Think Critically: How has mine safety changed in the past fifty years? Did the Farmington Mine Disaster force more federal oversight into mine safety? How did the town of Farmington deal with this major disaster?
MINE DISASTERS

Table of Contents
(History, Operations and Prevention)

including

Chapter 1
Introduction
The Farmington Mine Disaster
Chapter 2
Llewellyn Portal (during the disaster)
Chapter 3
Llewellyn Portal (during disaster)
Chapter 4
Llewellyn Portal (debris)

By

Twila Stowers Carr

Chapter 5
History
Chapter 6
Rescue and Mine Recovery Operations
Chapter 7
Hazards
Chapter 8
Prevention
Chapter 9
Conclusion

Submitted in partial fulfillment of class requirements in Fire Service and Safety Technology at Shepherd College, Shephardstown, West Virginia, as in 1988

D. Metal and Non-metal Mining Fatalities in 1988
E. Mining Fatalities, 1989 to 1987

Acknowledgements

End Notes

Instructors
Michael Athey
Richard Holdcraft

April 1989
By November 29, at least 24 additional explosions and fires had occurred. These conditions, along with dangerous levels of toxic gases, led to the decision to seal the mine. The Mod’s Run shaft was sealed with 26 tons of steel and concrete. Minutes after placement, an explosion blew out this seal. Later attempts at sealing the mine shaft were more successful. While the actual cause of the explosions were never pinpointed, several possible causes were suggested, including: high methane levels, violations of mine safety regulations or an explosion caused by faulty electrical equipment.

Sara Kazmoski, widow of a miner killed in the blast, thought, "It was too much gas that caused it," (the explosion) "but the company has never admitted it. There was so many strange things that happened about the tragedy. There'd been a fire in the mines earlier in the week." (One week after the state mine inspection). "The air fan wasn’t working, you know. It had broken down. They never said so, but the fan wasn’t working and there were very few escape-ways in those days. They have to have escape-ways now, but there weren’t any then...and the men were just trapped." As of this date, her husband’s body has not been recovered from the Farmington mine.
Some interesting information discovered about this disaster was the cruel treatment of families by the press, and the widows lack of financial compensation. Cee Smith, columnist for the Times-West Virginian, reports, "I have never been so ashamed of the media as I was then. The national media descended on the scene and they were the worst, rudest, nastiest, most obsequious people I have ever known. Two or three pregnant ladies were offered $100.00 to have their babies on camera to make the news more touching and they followed a seven-year-old girl around saying 'Did you cry when they said your daddy was trapped down there? Did you cry? Answer me!'" As for the widows compensation, it was extremely low, even for that early date. The widows received $90.00 a month state compensation and when old enough for social security, they became eligible for additional benefits. The UMWA at that date did not furnish the widows a pension.

Nineteen bodies remain sealed in the mine today, with the cause of the explosion still unknown. The final sealing of the mine prevented a complete investigation and official report. In the immediate or near future a federal report on the Farmington disaster will be released, according to Robert Elam, an engineer with MSHA's Coal Mine Safety and Health section.
Appendix B

TIME LINE

HOW THE FEDERAL MINE HEALTH AND SAFETY ACT CAME ABOUT

1907: Monongah, WV
   Explosion kills 308

1908: Jacobs Creek, PA
   Explosion kills 239

1909: Marianna, PA
   Explosion kills 154

1910: Public Law 61-179
   First federal action; Bureau of Mines created, but lacks power of enforcement

1940s: Bettley, WV
   Explosion kills 41

1940s: Neff, Ohio
   Explosion kills 72

1940s: Portage, PA
   Explosion kills 63

1941: Public Law 77-49
   Bureau of Mines inspectors given power to accompany state inspectors in mines

1947: Centralia, IL
   Explosion kills 111

1951: West Frankfort, IL
   Explosion kills 119

1952: Public Law 82-522
   Bureau of Mines given limited power to issue notices of violations

1961: Public Law 89-376
   Federal Metal/Non-Metal Act
   A two page law authorizing a study of safety problems
1965: Tennessee
   Explosion kills 14

1966: Public Law 89-377
   Federal Metal and Non-Metallic
   Mine Safety Act of 1966
   Federal inspectors had limited
   inspection/notice authority

1969: Public Law 91-173
   Federal Coal Mine Health and
   Safety Act of 1969
   Strict enforcement with mandatory
   fines and possible criminal
   penalties

1972: Kellogg, Idaho
   Fire kills 91

1976: Scotia, KY
   Explosion kills 26

1977: Public Law 95-164
   Federal Mine Safety and Health
   Act of 1977
   Enforcement agency moved to Dept.
   of Labor, renamed Mine Safety and
   Health Administration (MSHA)
Appendix C
COAL MINING FATALITIES IN 1988
Mine Safety and Health Administration
Office of Information and Public Affairs

Preliminary data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>By accident classification</th>
<th>By state</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Haulage.............. 18</td>
<td>Kentucky........ 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Machinery............ 13</td>
<td>West Virginia... 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall of roof......... 8</td>
<td>Virginia......... 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electrical........... 2</td>
<td>Pennsylvania.... 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explosives........... 2</td>
<td>Ohio............. 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exploding vessel.....</td>
<td>Utah............ 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>under pressure....... 2</td>
<td>Tennessee....... 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall of highwall..... 2</td>
<td>Alabama......... 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall of person....... 2</td>
<td>Arizona.......... 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inundation........... 1</td>
<td>Colorado........ 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other............... 1</td>
<td>Illinois........ 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total............. 52</td>
<td>Indiana......... 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Oklahoma....... 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Texas.......... 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wyoming........ 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total........... 52</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>By location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Underground</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surface at UG mine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surface mine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparation plant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Past years for comparison

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Deaths</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1889 (100 years ago)</td>
<td>728</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1907 (worst in history)</td>
<td>3,242</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1938 (50 years ago)</td>
<td>1,105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1963 (20 years ago)</td>
<td>311</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>106*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>70*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>68*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>63*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>52*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Represented a new historic low record since at least 1869.
(Records of coal mining fatalities for the 1800's are fragmentary, but at least partial counts have been compiled for each year starting with 1869; in that year, 179 coal mining deaths were recorded.)